923.242
Chu/Chu/Lif
23969

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016

00023969

THE

LIFE AND SPEECHES

OF

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL

Secretary of State for India,
M.P. for Woodstock, and Chairman of the National Union of Conservative Associations.

(SECOND EDITION, INCLUDING ACCESSION TO OFFICE.)

23969
aC

B2326

LONDON
JOHN AND ROBERT MAXWELL
SHOE LANE, AND 35, ST. BRIDE STREET, E.C.
(ALL RIGHTS RESERVED)

23969

PREFACE.

THE author of "Vivian Grey," in "What is He?" written in 1833, asks this question: "By what means, then, are we to obtain a strong Government?" and he answers his own question thus:—"We must discover some principle on which it can be founded. We must either revert to the *aristocratic* principal, or we must advance to the *democratic*. The Tories announce by their leaders that to govern the country with the present State machinery is impossible. Unless, therefore, the Tories believe that it is possible to restore the old principle of government, or unless they have embraced a martyrdom of political insignificance, they must advance to the new."

What the late Earl of Beaconsfield held to be true for the Conservative policy of the future, is also the informing idea political career of Lord Randolph Churchill. The bright promise of that career, and its already brilliant success have aroused, in no small degree, the sympathetic curiosity, and even the sanguine enthusiasm of English-speaking peoples, to whom this book, it is hoped, will supply a widely felt want.

THE EDITOR.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

The following letter has been received from Lord Randolph Churchill by Mr. H. H Wainwright, President of the Blackpool Conservative Association:—

2, Connaught-place, W., June 9.

My dear Mr. Wainwright,—You tell me in your letter of the 30th ult. that you find some difficulty in understanding my recent action in the House of Commons with respect to the Reform Bill.

The position of the Conservative party on the question of Parliamentary Reform ever since 1867 has been somewhat ill-defined. The action taken at that time by Mr. Disraeli and his colleagues made it impossible for the Conservative party at any future date to oppose on principle large extensions of the franchise.

That this result was clearly perceived by the authors of the Reform Bill of 1867 is proved by the fact that in no single speech of Mr. Disraeli or of Sir Stafford Northcote on the question of Parliamentary Reform can any trace be found of opposition to assimilation of county and borough suffrage on principle. The old Tory attitude of 1832 had been for ever abandoned. I think if you refer to Mr. Disraeli's address to the Buckinghamshire electors in 1874 you will find a passage clearly intimating that he himself was prepared, if necessary, to supplement his work of 1867 by doing what Mr. Gladstone is at present engaged on. If these facts had any meaning at all they meant this, that extension of the franchise was no longer a monopoly of the Liberal Party, and was not attended by any danger to the Constitution.

Lancashire, which is usually in the van of the Conservative party in Great Britain, was quick to detect the change when I went to Oldham and to Manchester in the autumn and winter of 1881 for the purpose of addressing public meetings. I was particularly enjoined by the leading gentlemen in those places not to say a word against the assimilation of the county and borough franchise. During the Sessions of 1880-81, 1881-82, 1882-83 the question of Parliamentary Reform was permitted to remain in a dormant state, and the position of both parties with regard to it was to no inconsiderable extent forgotten. Suddenly, in the autumn of 1883, it was rumoured that Parliament would be called upon to deal with the question; the recess oratory of Ministers and their followers confirmed the intelligence. The Conservative leaders were singularly reticent of their opinions, and I found myself (then, as now, a mere member of the rank and file of the party) obliged to go at length into this question of Reform before an Edinburgh audience, without having at my command any certain indication as to the course which the Conservative party would pursue. As the representative of a small agricultural borough, which any new Reform Bill must extinguish I could not be expected to look upon the measure with any very longing eye; further, in accordance with the maxim that it was the duty of the Opposition to oppose, I considered that it would be right and reasonable for Conservatives to resist the proposed Reform Bill on the ground of—(1) The inopportuneness of the moment chosen, and the far more urgent character of other questions; (2) the obvious risk of any large addition to the Irish electorate; (3) the transparent design of the Government to divert public attention from foreign affairs; (4) the absence of any indication on the part of the unenfranchised masses of any great desire for the voting privilege. On these grounds, at Edinburgh I spoke against Reform, but I perceived that my views, though listened to with kindness and courtesy, were not highly acceptable to the intelligent audience of Scotch artisans which I was addressing; and, moreover, the disagreement with those views which was expressed from the platform by Mr Balfour and Lord Elcho harmonised unmistakably with the prevalent opinion of the meeting. In the ensuing period before the opening of Parliament I ascertained, from the ordinary sources of exact information, that no unanimity of feeling on the subject of Parliamentary Reform existed among our party; that many boroughs members, and particularly Lancashire members, were positively in favour of the change, and that direct opposition in principle was only to be expected from a highly influential but numerically small circle of members representing country and borough constituencies of a rural character.

Under these circumstances, after Parliament had met, and after that the Opposition had failed to overthrow the Government on the Egyptian policy, and after that the Reform Bill had been introduced and read a first time without opposition, I proposed on the second reading of the Bill to move the previous question, a form of opposition which appeared to combine most of the objections which I had stated at Edinburgh, while not committing anyone who might support it to resistance to Reform on principle. Sir Stafford Northcote requested me not to persevere with this motion, which had precedence over the amendment of Lord John Manners, and it was accordingly removed from the paper. Now, Lord John Manners's motion, if it meant anything at all—and on this I am not prepared positively to decide—meant that the Conservative party was prepared to deal with the extension of the franchise provided that the measure was accompanied by provisions for the redistribution of seats. Yet, even his modified form of resistance did not secure the support of the entire Conservative party, and was defeated by the overwhelming majority of 130. Finally, on the motion to go into Committee, Mr. Chaplin's pro-

posal to exclude Ireland from the Bill met with so little favour from the leaders of our party that he wisely declined to press it to a division.

These things being so, I am sanguine that all impartial persons will agree that a frank and open departure from the position of strong resistance to Reform which I had taken up in December was not only pardonable, but incumbent upon any practical politician. Had that position been the position of the Conservative party generally, I would certainly have adhered to it at any sacrifice; but, far from that, it was not even the position of any considerable section of the party who, as a body, recurred to the policy of Mr. Disraeli. Moreover, since December, I had, by the favour of the Conservatives in Birmingham, become a candidate for the Parliamentary representation of that immense constituency, and undoubtedly in Birmingham there existed no serious difference between Liberals and Conservatives as to the propriety of the assimilation of the county and borough franchise. Having thus been guided to the conclusion that Reform was inevitable, and that equality of political rights between Great Britain and Ireland was to govern the Conservatives as well as the Liberals, I did not conceal my change of mind from the House of Commons or the public. It appeared to me to be as reasonable and intelligible a change of mind as it would be possible for any member of Parliament to undergo brought about not by one short debate, as has been most erroneously asserted, but by a careful study of a continued succession of circumstances, extending over a period of five months. I am sure that it is well for our public life that a change of opinion on any great question, should it take place, should be frankly and fearlessly avowed; and I believe the violent censure of such a change, if generally adopted, would tend to produce hypocrisy and political dishonesty; and, possessed by that idea, I do not now hesitate to remark that if the Government were to give a definite guarantee to Parliament that the Reform legislation shall not be operative until the redistribution of seats has been provided for by the announcement that Parliament will be called together in the autumn to complete the scheme, and by the insertion of a proper date in the present Bill before which no election shall take place under it, then I see no strong or overwhelming reason why the labours of the present Session should be rendered abortive by the rejection of the Bill for the representation of the people.

Believe me to be, yours very faithfully,
(Signed,) RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LIFE OF LORD RANDOLPH HENRY SPENCER-CHURCHILL, M.P.	5
ADDRESSES TO THE ELECTORS OF WOODSTOCK BEFORE AND AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION, 1874	28
LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1874-78	31
LORD BEACONSFIELD'S LETTER TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH	33
ADDRESS TO THE ELECTORS OF WOODSTOCK, 1880	35
SPEECH AT WOODSTOCK, MARCH 15TH, 1880	37
THREE SPEECHES ON THE BRADLAUGH QUESTION	44
EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES, 1883-84	54
BIRMINGHAM SPEECHES, APRIL, 1884	85
SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1883-84	105

LIFE OF
LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

LORD Randolph Henry Spencer-Churchill, third son of the sixth Duke of Marlborough, by Lady Frances Anne Emily, eldest daughter of the third Marquess of Londonderry, was born in 1849 at Blenheim Palace, near Woodstock. Having entered Merton College, Oxford, at the age of eighteen, he graduated in 1871 in the usual course. Traditions even now are current in his college of his brilliancy in conversation and ready wit. He was prominent at the Union Debating Society, where he made many friends, some of whom were not afraid to forecast the future and to predict for his lordship a distinguished career.

In 1874, at the age of twenty-five, he married Jenny, daughter of Leonard Jerome, Esq., of New York. He made the acquaintance of this lady, who is distinguished by her personal charms, in the course of a tour taken in the United States, on the termination of his University career. In the year of his marriage he sought the suffrages of the borough of Woodstock, and was returned to the House of Commons. His maiden speech was delivered May 22, 1874, on the occasion of the motion by Mr. Beresford Hope, for a select Committee to inquire into the expediency of selecting Oxford as a military centre. Sir William Harcourt complimented Lord Randolph on this speech, and Mr. Mowbray said: "I must, in passing, allude to the able speech of my noble friend the member for Woodstock, and congratulate him on the promise he has given of attaining great distinction in this House." His next speech was delivered in May, 1875, in the course of the debate on unreformed boroughs. It has been observed that the whole tone of this speech was that of a man who had felt his feet in the House, and was relieved by frequent flashes of that sarcastic

humour which Lord Randolph Churchill has since developed in such a high degree.

The Attorney-General said that he must confess that until he heard the speech of the noble Lord, the member for Woodstock, he thought that the case of the hon. baronet (Sir C. Dilke) against these corporations could not be answered without further enquiry. He must say that the noble Lord had most efficiently defended the borough of Woodstock. The motion was subsequently withdrawn.

Lord Churchill spoke in the same year with reference to the visit of the Prince of Wales to India, and to the expenses of the journey. A motion had been made by Mr. Fawcett to the effect that it was inexpedient that any part of the expenses of the personal entertainment of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on the occasion of his proposed visit to India should be charged on the revenues of that country. Lord Randolph Churchill briefly replied, adversely criticising the timidity of the proposals of the Government; but he remarked that the projected visit of the Prince had gone too far for such a question to be raised, and that it should have been made when matters were not almost fully developed. He thought that the proposed visit should be supported with an unsparing, if not lavish hand. It may be noticed that at this time Lord Randolph Churchill displayed a tendency to take independent views, which seemed on more than one occasion to place him in a position of hostility to the leaders of his party, and for which he incurred severe criticism; but the constituencies recognised his boldness and originality, and these qualities, thus displayed, won him much sympathy.

During 1876, his Lordship did not address the House, and from 1877 to 1879 his voice was seldom raised in Parliament. The General Election of 1880 opened a field for his abilities. The Conservative party had become listless and demoralised, partly by the extent of the Gladstone majority and by the death of the Earl of Beaconsfield. The so-called Fourth Party formed itself to reanimate the drooping spirits of those who were not crushed by defeat; and to vindicate in the House of Commons and the country the continued existence and powers of Constitutional principles. Lord Randolph Churchill became now one of the most active and prominent members of the House, and there is scarcely a branch of foreign or domestic politics which he has not handled, and handled effectually, and no important debate is now considered complete until he has given expression to his views. With reference to Lord Randolph Churchill's attitude on the Bradlaugh Question, Mr. Justin McCarthy, junior, says in an excellent and useful work just published, "England under Gladstone":—"The Bradlaugh

episode had one curious influence upon the House of Commons —it consolidated, it might, indeed, be said to have created, the Fourth Party; and it brought a new man prominently forward into political life. Lord Randolph Churchill had been half a dozen years in Parliament, when Mr. Bradlaugh was elected member for Northampton, but up to that time he had playedpractically no part in the House. When he spoke he was listened to because he was the son of a great Tory Duke; but nobody paid much attention to what he said, and it occurred to nobody to regard him as a political influence. Mr. Bradlaugh's advent was Lord Randolph Churchill's opportunity. He made himself at once conspicuous as the opponent of Mr. Bradlaugh and the atheistic Government, who supported him. Burke flinging the dagger of the Jacobites on the floor of the House of Commons, found a modern imitator in Lord Randolph Churchill trampling under foot some printed writings of the member for Northampton. The House had laughed at Burke, it also laughed at Lord Randolph Churchill; but it soon began to discover that Lord Randolph Churchill was not a young man to be put down or disconcerted by any amount of laughter. He asserted himself again and again, he spoke as often as he pleased; he treated the recognised leaders of his party with a frank indifference, which was not a little shocking to established Conservative traditions. He began alone but he soon found companions. . . . . Three other persons were found to intend as Lord Randolph Churchill intended: Sir Henry Wolff, Mr. Gorst and Mr. Arthur Balfour. These four gentlemen found themselves agreed as to the necessity of lending new vigour to the Tory cause, and their own fate-appointed duty to lend that vigour. They formed a little party together, a small Tory cave, soon nicknamed in the slang of the House the Fourth Party. . . . . But in a little while the Government and its followers, and the gentlemen in opposition above the gangway, began to perceive that Lord Randolph's attitude was not quite as comic as it had appeared at first. . . . . The ranks of the ministerialists could not furnish forth any champion so audacious, so self-reliant, so indifferent to opinion as Lord Randolph Churchill."

As far as regards the Fourth Party, Lord Randolph Churchill's connection with it, and his attitude and mannerisms in the House of Commons, the subjoined extract from Mr. David Anderson's "Scenes in the Commons" may prove interesting, as well as give useful information:—

"The fourth party consists of three persons—Lord Randolph Henry Spencer-Churchill, M.P. for Woodstock; Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, K.C.B., M.P. for Christchurch; and Mr.

John Eldon Gorst, M.P. for Chatham, all three capable men. The sobriquet originated in a jocular remark of Sir Henry Wolff, who, alluding to the fact that the Parnellites consider themselves a 'third party' said, 'Then we will be the Fourth party.' Lord Randolph Churchill, leader of the 'dauntless three,' does not now recognise the propriety of the description, and never alludes to it in public, as it gives great offence to the acknowledged Conservative chiefs. Nevertheless, if my recollection serves, the noble lord announced in the House, on one occasion, that he himself 'and they who act with me, will support ministers in their endeavours to pacify Ireland,' and that the assurance excited no inconsiderable amount of banter. I likewise distinctly remember the night of August 9th, 1880. The estimates were being discussed as usual in a thin House—when Mr. Biggar, looking round with a pleased expression of countenance, called the attention of Dr. Lyon Playfair, the chairman, to the palpable fact, that there were not forty members present. After the 'count,' and when the disturbed legislators had gone back to their dinners, the salaries of officers of the Courts of Judicature being under discussion, Mr. Watkin Williams, since raised to the bench, was very severe on the judge's 'marshal.' Crossing from his place on the Liberal side, he took a seat in Opposition, whence rising, he inveighed against the red robes of the judges, their hot horse-hair wigs, their carriages and javelin-men, their going to church in state, and what he was pleased to describe as 'the rest of the old-fashioned rubbish.'

"A thrill of horror seemed to run through the sparse assembly as the hon. gentleman avowed this doctrine of judicial Iconoclasm; and he had scarcely sat down when Mr. Gorst rose, close by, and indignantly repudiated the then member for Carnarvonshire, 'in the name of "the Fourth Party."' Mr. Watkin Williams, he complained, had selected that bench from which to express disrespect for the pomp and state of the judges of Assize; but he, Mr. Gorst, and the 'Fourth Party,' had no sympathy with him. This more or less serious reference to that political union caused an outburst of laughter which quite smoothed away the frown begotten of Mr. Watkin Williams's more than revolutionary sentiments on the subject of the judge's wigs and their 'marshals.'

"That this trio consider themselves 'a party' may be inferred from the incident that at the end of a session they have dined together at Greenwich, and that the *mènu* on that occasion was not innocent of whitebait. Mr. Arthur Balfour, M.P. for Hertford, was at one time a nominal member of the group, but has long since ceased to work with them.

"Politicians are attracted towards a man of dominant mind, as soldiers rally to the colours on a battle-field, and the Duke's son inherits many of the qualities of the Conqueror of Blenheim. Although not yet thirty-five years old, he is among the most brilliant and conspicuous members of the House of Commons, in which assembly he has occupied a seat since February, 1874. Scarcely above the middle height, of slight build, and apparently delicate constitution, Lord Randolph Churchill has smooth, dark brown hair, parted down the middle, and thin at the crown. The head is small, the eyes large, the nose short, and the cheek-bones somewhat high. His lordship's moustache is, however, the most conspicuous object of his personal appearance. It is the large blonde moustache of a Zouave of politics. Once, by mistake, Mr. Jacob Bright alluded to the noble lord as 'the Member for Woodcock,' and the House laughed consumedly. And once a newspaper scribe hit upon a happier title: 'The Bantam of Debate.' From four o'clock in the afternoon, all through dreary question time, he sits impatiently in his place, gently agitating his left knee, nursed above his right, and affectionately caressing the moustache. Dexter and sinister hands go up alternately to the silky darling of his lips. Fresh with rest, or haggard and pale with late hours, Lord Randolph never ceases to fondle the moustache. It lends an added joy to the unfrequent hour of victory, or, while Lord Hartington, sixteen years his senior, attempts, but fails, to wither him, with an assumption of patriarchal superiority.

"Undoubtedly this old-young man prefers politics to what is called pleasure, yet does not ignore the claims of society in the world of words. He is of the very few Members of Parliament who dress for dinner. So the flowers and songsters of the virgin forest, unseen, unheard of man, are made pleasant to look on; and what nature does for bud and blossom, the barber and the tailor do for the lively leader of the Fourth Party.

"Lord Randolph's clothes are, however, but the husk of him, the outside part first seen. The kernel within seems sound, and, if carefully preserved, may hereafter become illustrious. His industry is marvellous, his readiness of resource worthy of all praise; and though he speaks frequently, he is on the whole worth listening to. He is not eloquent with the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright. He has, indeed, a slight lisp, an imperfection of vocal delivery which spoils his pronunciation of some of the consonants, particularly of the letter 's.' If, however, he never rises to lofty heights of declamation, he seldom sinks below the safe level of commonplace. His occasional observations are neatly turned, and his set speeches

cleverly constructed. He is scarcely ever at a loss for an idea, never for a word. Reverence—what is called veneration—cannot, however, be described as his strong point. Supposed to be subordinate to Sir Stafford Northcote, when it suits him to be so, he defies his chief; and the approved leaders of the Liberal party fret under his stinging and unsparing invective. Though not always brilliant, his sallies are often cutting. His daring knows no bounds. Mr. Gladstone once called across the floor that he had smashed, pulverised, and demolished him. That was a mistake. The Prime Minister might as well have attempted to annihilate a Jack-in-the-box by shutting down the lid.

"Besides obtaining a more commodious smoking-room for the use of his fellow-members, the noble lord has rendered good service to Parliament and the country since the accession of Mr. Gladstone to office, and particularly by the part he took in mitigating the rigours of the Clôture Resolutions. The Premier and his colleagues believed, no doubt sincerely, that it was impossible for them to carry on the business of the country under the old system of debate, which admitted of obstruction. That system, however, embraced privileges which had been gradually wrested from the Crown during centuries of struggle; and its modification as proposed and effected, was, and is, calculated to place enormous power in the hands of the ministers of the day; to invest them with a prerogative of silencing discussion of a kind, amounting to tyranny, not tolerated by the commons of old, even when assumed by kings. The Fourth Party fought the new rules as drafted—tooth and nail—and succeeded in winning many concessions invaluable to both sides. For it must always be borne in mind that government by party is a game of see-saw. Indeed, a time may come when Liberals will bitterly repent the part they took in passing the new rules of procedure."

During the debate on the Clôture his Lordship offered the most strenuous opposition to the ministerial proposals, and declined to vote for Mr. Marriott's amendment in favour of a two-thirds majority. To do this seemed to him irreconcileable with principles which he declined to sacrifice even for the sake of snatching a party vote. No one has failed to observe the industry and patient attention bestowed by his Lordship on the affairs of Egypt.

We now come to an important period in the career of Lord Randolph Churchill, that in which he openly and emphatically protested against the manner in which the affairs of the constitutional party were conducted in the House of Commons by the official leaders of the Opposition. We cannot do better

than again quote from Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy's book, "England under Gladstone," which really seems to be a very admirable work:—"On April 2, Lord Randolph Churchill, judging that the time had come for him to take a yet more active part in politics, addressed a manifesto to the city and the world. The manifesto took the form of a letter to the *Times*. 'The position of the Conservative party,' wrote Lord Randolph, 'at present is hopeful and critical.' But like the angry hive of bees in Warwick's simile, the Conservative party wanted a leader. Their names at once presented themselves to Lord Randolph's mind. 'If the electors are in a negative frame of mind, they may accept Sir Stafford Northcote; if they are in a cautious frame of mind, they may shelter themselves under Lord Cairns; if they are in an English frame of mind, they will rally round Lord Salisbury.' Salisbury was indeed the burden of Lord Randolph's letter. 'Honourable rescue and defence' for the Tory party, 'cried out upon the name of Salisbury,' and, like Louis of France, Lord Randolph appealed to renowned Salisbury to lift up his brow, and with a great heart, heave away the inaction of party due to the conduct of the 'junta' of leaders of Opposition in the House of Commons. Lord Randolph was dismayed at the 'series of neglected opportunities, pusillanimity, combativeness at wrong moments, vacillation, dread of responsibility, repression and discouragement of hard-working followers, collusions with the Government, hankerings after coalitions, jealousies, commonplaces, and want of perception on the part of the former lieutenants of Lord Beaconsfield.' All this was due to the want of real leadership, and to the way in which the opportunities of the party were 'handled by third-rate statesmen, such as were good enough to fill subordinate offices while Lord Beaconsfield was alive.' The Conservative party, Lord Randolph declared, was formed for better ends than 'the short-lived triumph and speedy disgrace of "bourgeois" placemen, "honourable" Tadpoles, hungry Tapers, Irish lawyers.' Lord Salisbury alone could save the party; Lord Salisbury alone could save the country.

"The country, it must be admitted, smiled a good deal at Lord Randolph's effort to save it; but it smiled goodhumouredly. There was something not displeasing in the cool audacity with which Lord Randolph postured as the Elisha of the mantle of Lord Beaconsfield, as the patron of the house of Cecil, and as the saviour of his country, which disarmed any feeling angrier than amused interest. The immediate followers and allies of Sir Stafford Northcote must be excepted from this sense of amused interest. They were annoyed, indignant, incoherent. Lord Salisbury himself did not appear to be greatly elated by

Lord Randolph's homage. In the phraseology of childhood, Lord Randolph had spoken one word for Lord Salisbury and two for himself. Lately, Lord Randolph Churchill and Lord Salisbury have almost parted company. It was easy to see, even then, that, under all the respectful reverence for the 'English' leadership of Lord Salisbury, Lord Randolph cherished the complacent conviction that the Tory party need not go to the Upper House to find the needed new leader. But the country is always goodhumouredly tolerant of youthful ambition, even of youthful audacity. Lord Randolph was evidently playing a part learned from the life of the young Disraeli, and the country perhaps remembered that its merriment over the young Disraeli had not been particularly happy. At any rate, it recognised Lord Randolph's right to prophecy, even while it made merry over his prophecies. Lord Randolph cared very little for the mirth of his opponents or his political allies. 'Laugh, but hear me,' he might have said, paraphrasing the well-worn classic story. He had been steadily advancing more and more into the public view ever since the new Parliament, and his letter, made him more conspicuous than ever. It provoked a counter-demonstration in favour of Sir Stafford Northcote, in the shape of an address signed by two hundred members of the Conservative party, assuring him of their allegiance. It called down angry letters, which Lord Randolph took with great composure. In a second letter to the *Times* he expressed himself as 'only too happy to bear the brunt of a little temporary effervescence, and to be the scapegoat on which doomed mediocrities may lay the burden of their exposed incapacity.' If Lord Salisbury declined to follow his advice, then it became his duty to save the party and the country himself; and Lord Randolph promptly assumed for himself, with no timid hesitation, the position of Lord Beaconsfield's successor."

In the beginning of the year 1884, Lord Randolph Churchill was requested to stand for the Borough of Birmingham in the coming General Election. He, with a courage that is of a piece with the whole spirit of a worthy career, accepted the invitation. In April, 1884, he went to Birmingham to address those, who, we may surely hope, will be his future constituents. The *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, the ably conducted, respected and long-continued organ of Toryism in the Midlands, is of opinion that no candidature has excited a tithe of the interest in the country as that of Lord Randolph Churchill. The same paper is of opinion that Lord Randolph Churchill's attack on Mr. Bright was amply justified, as the plagiarist of Mr. Villiers, though living in a glass-house, has an unfortunate habit of

throwing stones. In a word, Lord Randolph Churchill has said what multitudes think, but who, like the sailor's parrot, "can't talk." His Lordship's prospects in Birmingham are brght and promising: friends elate, foes depressed. His success will be deserved, and most people think he will command it.

Unfortunately, just after the successful initiation of his Birmingham campaign, Lord Randolph Churchill had to undergo fresh annoyance from the leaders of his party, which, in view of the fact that he is not physically strong, was, to say the least of it, singularly unhappy.

He was elected Chairman of the National Union of Conservative Associations—and we subjoin a record of the events that have made May, 1884, a month to be wondered at in the annals of political life in England. In the beginning of May he resigned this chairmanship.

The *Standard*, of May 7th, 1884, thus commented on the report of Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation of the Chairmanship of the Council of the National Union of Conservative Associations :—

"Lord Randolph Churchill, it is said, has resigned the Chairmanship of the Council of the National Union of Conservative Associations. How much truth there may be in the statement it is not very material to inquire. The mere report of his retirement has led people to very much the same reflections as the most precisely authenticated announcement of his withdrawal would have suggested. The smallest incident, or semblance of an incident, is, in fact, sufficient to bring to the surface of discussion considerations which are never absent from the mind of judicious Conservatives. Any one who has taken any interest in observing the course and condition of the party would simply treat the demonstration of feeling attributed to the Member for Woodstock as a natural, though, no doubt, a striking, development of tendencies which he has been at pains not to conceal. We do not question that the renunciation by so ardent and popular a controversialist of all part and lot in the work of organisation would deprive the forces of the Opposition of one of its strong elements of offensive warfare. But in so far as the step involves the renunciation of the authority of the titular chiefs, it will only be a link of fresh pattern in a sufficiently familiar chain. Lord Randolph Churchill claims to be a Tory. That he sympathises with most of the traditional doctrines of the Party no student of his copious discourses can question, and, beyond all shadow and possibility of doubt, he is a convinced and active member of the Opposition. But he has more than once gone out of his way

to disclaim fellowship with the Conservative party as it is now directed, and his bitterest onslaughts on the Ministry have been set off by playful depreciation of the front Opposition bench. If Lord Randolph Churchill stood alone, or if his escapades were purely of the rhetorical kind, we might pardon the mockery out of gratitude for the wit. But, unfortunately, as the pages of *Hansard* show, the guerilla tactics of a few eager spirits very often thwart and defeat the plans of their responsible chiefs. If there be any pretence of justification for the Liberal cry of obstruction, it lies in the operations of this adventurous group. The party suffers in public esteem in order that a few tumultuary adherents may win their way to notoriety.

"Take, for instance, the current incidents of the Egyptian Question. The significance of the facts reported in the public journals is obvious to any man of commonplace intelligence; the revelations of the Blue Books offer materials which needs no special gift to manipulate to the ruin of Ministerial reputations. If exceptional knowledge or skill in dialectics were necessary, both would be found, we will not say among Conservatives of Cabinet rank, but in many private members who are content to await in modest silence the due occasion of speech. We need hardly remark how sharp a contrast the conduct of a few presents to this general reserve. Not as regards Egypt only, but in the whole domain of Foreign Policy, some otherwise inconspicuous members have managed by mere pertinacity to create for themselves a practical monopoly at question time. The same interrogation appears and reappears with unrelenting monotony; and this little clique, by sheer extravagance of view, invests the cause with a ridicule to which they are themselves insensible. This effacement of legitimate action by the zeal of individuals would be of evil omen under any circumstances. But, under existing conditions, it is peculiarly unfortunate. Never, perhaps, has a Ministry, so strong in the numerical array of supporters, had so precarious a hold on the confidence of the Constituencies. Never have an Opposition, recovering from a crushing defeat at the elections, managed in a briefer period to become unmistakably the champions of a winning cause. A large section of the Liberal members, representing probably that margin of public political sentiment which decides the fate of Parties, watch with disappointment and humiliation the results which the Ministerial management of Foreign Affairs has already brought about, and the future which is foreshadowed. But, in truth, on this point the whole nation outside the Cabinet feel alike. As to schemes of domestic legislation it may be said generally, that one section

of the Ministerialists accepts them only on the assurance of the managers of the Party that they are indispensable to the maintenance of the ill-sorted alliance. Of enthusiasm out of doors there is no indication, and there has almost ceased to be any boast of it. There is, we hope, no cynicism in the remark that in the distresses of the country lies the opportunity of the Opposition. Nothing is wanting to success save leadership. But leadership implies discipline, and discipline fails. There is no want of unity in the councils of the Chiefs, there is no defect of allegiance and cheerful obedience in the Party as a whole. But the few jarring strings in the orchestra spoil the concert. The conductor lays down his *baton* in despair when the trombone and the horn insist upon taking all the parts.

"We have spoken our mind plainly on the matter; for no one who has the future of Conservatism at heart will care to mince words. The question of discipline must be settled, unless the disordered and disheartened ranks of the Ministerialists are to remain masters of the field. But we desire to be fair as well as frank. We do not enter into the delicate question of individual motive; we have only to examine the ground on which the 'Detached' section can with any plausibility justify their separate and exclusive initiative. The example set in Midlothian, as we have again and again pointed out, has proved contagious. It is not considered enough that facts are fatal to Ministers; their force must be rendered sensible by perpetual iteration, harassment, invective, inquiry. Now, from work such as this, Sir Stafford Northcote naturally recoils. In the judgment of Lord Randolph Churchill it is sufficient to injure the Ministry. He is a chartered libertine in the matter of opinion. Any view that is possible and plausible is, with all the fire of honest, though unstable conviction, pressed home. Every subject, any occasion, serves. To a statesman who has led the House of Commons—who was old in affairs when the Member for Woodstock was a schoolboy—the programme which has charms for the heyday of political youth is manifestly forbidden. Sir Stafford Northcote has to think of the future first, because he can point to a record of the past. It would be waste of time to convict the central figure of the Fourth Party of inconsistency. He has all Mr. Gladstone's facility of self-persuasion without a particle of his skill in providing avenues of dialectical escape. He fights in the open, using any weapon he can find, and cares nothing for making his retreat dignified. Sir Stafford Northcote is of far other mould. In Opposition he will do nothing which in office he would complain of as unfair. If he were not endowed by nature with the troublesome gift of consistency he would learn the use of cautious speech from

the straits into which his great opponent is almost daily brought. The practical question is whether, without compromising the authority of the chiefs—that is to say, of the great mass of the party whose confidence alone creates leaders—the services of the more impetuous and impatient opponents of the Ministry cannot be utilised in the common cause. Mr. Gladstone turned to good account the prejudices and the ardour of his extreme wing. There is no reason why the leaders of the Opposition should not do the same. The friars may be encouraged, to the great advantage of the regular orders. Every sensible man must feel that Conservatism may in a wholesome sense be Democratic, without becoming Demagogic; and it is with the idea of making its doctrines intelligible and acceptable to the masses that, in his happiest moods and most effective efforts, Lord Randolph Churchill labours. But within the House of Commons there must be an end of the prevailing anarchy. If the member for Woodstock cannot brook the bonds of discipline, he must be taken at his word, and treated as an independent member, whose ideas do not accord and whose tactics conflict with those of the Conservative Opposition. The legitimate depositories of the confidence of the Party must either resign their authority or make it effectively felt. They must no longer allow those to lead who disdain to follow. If Lord Randolph Churchill should reply that we design for him precisely the fate by which he has already elected to abide, we have no complaint to make. But, excellent as is the promise of future achievements which his irregular performances disclose, we may be permitted to remind him that he is not yet enough of a personage to stand alone. Petulance and acerbity have before now opened a way of advancement; but it would be a poor recommendation in the eyes of the Conservatives of Birmingham that their candidate has broken with the Party, in whose name he appeals to them for confidence."

Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation of the Chairmanship of the National Union of Conservative Associations and his re-election to the office.

A mischievous explanation of Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation of the Chairmanship of the National Union of Conservative Associations appeared in the *Standard* of May 6th, 1884, and was printed by that journal as below:—

"The following statement, which comes to us on good authority, will be read with interest:—

"After Lord Randolph Churchill was appointed Chairman of the Union of Conservative Associations, great tension was created among the leaders of the party because the noble lord refused in any way to recognise the Central Conservative Committee, which was nominated by Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote, and consists of Lord Henniker, Mr. Whitley, M.P., Mr. Thomas Salt, M.P., Mr. A. Balfour, M.P., Mr. E. Stanhope, M.P., and the Party Whips. Lord R. Churchill preferred to assume that the Council of the Union, being elected by Conservative associations throughout the country, was to be regarded as a representative body, with the right to control the entire party. He provoked the anger of some of his supporters by speaking at Birmingham of this Council becoming the 'Caucus' of the party, and the estrangement was increased by the noble lord forming an Executive Committee of the Council, consisting of himself, Mr. Gorst, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, and one or two others, attached friends, which was to have such large powers that the control of the organisation would virtually have been transferred from the front Opposition bench to the front Opposition bench below the gangway. Lord R. Churchill further proposed a separate establishment for the Union in rooms apart from the Central Committee. Last Friday a crisis was reached on a motion by Mr. J. Maclean, who had previously supported Lord R. Churchill's policy of making the Council a more active body, but had voted against the appointment of the Executive Committee as being too partisan. Mr. Maclean's motion was, in effect, that as it is of paramount importance that the Central Committee of the party and the Council of the National Union should act harmoniously together, a Committee be appointed to confer with the Central Committee in order to secure that end. Such Committee was to consist of Lord R. Churchill, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. E. Clarke, and Mr. Maclean. The Motion was carried by four or five votes. Lord Randolph regarded this as a vote of censure. He and Mr. Gorst refused to serve on the Committee, and Lord Randolph even retired from the Chairmanship of the Union. Mr. Houldsworth, M.P., and Lord G. Hamilton were appointed in the place of Lord R. Churchill and Mr. Gorst. Last evening the Committee so appointed held a conference with the Central Committee of the Party, and there is now a prospect of arranging a *modus vivendi*. Mr. Gorst has not retired from the Vice-Chairmanship, nor has Mr. Raikes retired from the Council, as has been stated. Lord R. Churchill is not a martyr, as he alleges, to the principle of decentralisation. He was opposed because he wished to make the Union a caucus which should dictate to Conservative members of

Parliament and to local associations. The supporters of Mr. Maclean's Motion especially referred to this danger, and recalled Lord Salisbury's declaration in Manchester in favour of local autonomy of the Associations. It was urged that local Associations should be independent of each other, and that the Council of the Union should be consultative, instead of executive. Lord R. Churchill's attitude towards the policy of Lord Salisbury was further aggravated by some angry correspondence, because Lord Salisbury has not taken Lord R. Churchill's view of what one of Lord Salisbury's letters really meant. From this stage Lord R. Churchill broke away, and wrote an irritating letter to Lord Salisbury, which circumstance, together with the nomination of an Executive Committee above referred to, induced the majority of the Council to pass Mr. Maclean's Motion. Yet the majority have no desire to censure Lord Randolph personally, nor to drive him out of the Party. They consider him to have vindicated his claim to a high position in the Councils of the Party, but the time has gone by when he can maintain an independent line of action which frequently thwarts the plans of the Leaders.

"We understand that no steps have as yet been taken to fill up the vacant Chairmanship caused by Lord Randolph Churchill's retirement."

The noble lord thereupon addressed the following letter to the editor of that paper:—"Sir,—I observe in your columns this morning 'a statement,' which you aver comes to you on 'good authority,' with reference to my connection with the Council of the National Union of Conservative Associations. The 'good authority' is, I fear, some evil-disposed person who was anxious to gratify a little private malice. Allow me to point out a few trifling inaccuracies. 1. It is stated that I 'provoked the anger of some of my supporters by speaking at Birmingham of this Council becoming the caucus of the party.' I never provoked the anger of any of my supporters by speaking at Birmingham of this Council becoming the caucus of the party, for the very excellent reason that I made use of no such expressions, as you will be able to ascertain if you kindly will refer to the report of my speeches. 2. It is stated that 'the estrangement was increased by the noble lord forming an executive committee of the Council, consisting of himself, Mr. Gorst, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, and one or two others, attached friends.' I formed no such committee, having no power to make any such formation. The Council elected an executive committee, thus composed:—The Right Hon. Cecil Raikes, M.P., Earl Percy, M.P., Mr. H. Chaplin, M.P., Mr. Clarke, M.P., Mr. Dixon-Hartland, M.P., Sir H. Drummond Wolff,

M.P., and Mr. Cotter. The chairman and vice-chairman are, by the rules of the National Union, *ex-officio* members of all committees of the council. On this committee my 'attached friends,' Earl Percy, M.P., Mr. Chaplin, M.P., and Mr. Clarke, M.P., declined to serve. 3. It is stated—'Lord R. Churchill further proposed a separate establishment for the Union in rooms apart from the Central Committee.' I made no such proposal. The executive committee were under the necessity of finding premises, on account of a notice to quit which the Council had received from Lord Salisbury, but up to the date of their last meeting had not been successful in their search. 4. It is stated—'Lord R. Churchill is not a martyr, as he alleges, to the principle of decentralization.' I have made no such allegation, either in public or private. 5. It is stated—'He was opposed because he wished to make the Union a caucus which should dictate to Conservative members of Parliament and to local associations.' This is a monstrous misstatement which requires no notice beyond a flat denial. 6. It is stated—'From this stage Lord R. Churchill broke away, and wrote an irritating letter to Lord Salisbury, which circumstance . . . induced the majority of the Council to pass Mr. Maclean's motion.' The 'irritating letter,' here referred to was approved of by the Council by a majority of nineteen against thirteen, and on the motion of Mr. Houldsworth, M.P., and Mr. H. Chaplin, M.P., was inserted on the minutes of the Council by a majority of eighteen against eleven. 7. It is stated—'Yet the majority have no desire to censure Lord Randolph personally, nor to drive him out of the party.' I cannot imagine who he is who thus permits himself to speak in the name of 'the majority,' but am glad to have an opportunity of recognising in the fullest manner his generosity and amiability in thus publicly abstaining from an act which neither he nor any one else has the slightest power to perform."

The "irritating letter" referred to is dated from the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Association, St. Stephen's-chambers, Westminster, 3rd April, 1884, and in it Lord Randolph Churchill informed Lord Salisbury that he has laid "your letter of the 1st inst., in which you indicate your reconsidered views and those of Sir Stafford Northcote concerning the position and functions of the National Union of Conservative Associations, before the organization committee. It is quite clear to us that in the letters we have from time to time addressed to you, and in the conversations which we have had the honour of holding with you on this subject, we have hopelessly failed to convey to your mind anything like an appreciation either of the significance of the movement which the

National Union commenced at Birmingham in October last, or of the unfortunate effect which a neglect or repression of that movement by the leaders of the party would have upon the Conservative cause. The resolution of the conference at Birmingham in October, a conference attended by upwards of 450 delegates from all parts of the country, directed the Council of the National Union to take steps to secure for that body its legitimate share in the management of the party organization, This was an expression of dissatisfaction with the condition of the organization of the party, and of a determination on the part of the National Union that it should no longer continue to be a sham, useless, and even hardly ever ornamental, portion of that organisation. The resolution signified that the old methods of party organization—namely, the control of Parliamentary elections by the leader, the whips, the paid agents drawing their resources from secrets funds which were suitable to the manipulation of the ten-pound householder, were utterly obsolete, and would not secure the confidence of the masses of the people who were enfranchised by Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill, and that the time had arrived when the centre of organizing energy should be an elected, representative, and responsible body. The delegates at the conference were evidently of opinion that if the principles of the Conservative party were to obtain popular support the organization of the party would have to become an imitation, thoroughly real and *bona fide* in its nature, of that popular form of representative organization which had contributed so greatly to the triumph of the Liberal party in 1880, and which was best known to the public by the name of the Birmingham caucus. The caucus may be perhaps a name of evil sound and omen in the ears of aristocratic or privileged classes, but it is undeniably the only form of political organization which can collect, guide, and control for common objects large masses of electors, and there is nothing in this particular form of political combination which is in the least repugnant to the working classes in this country." After referring to a previous letter in which Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote had entered sympathetically and fully into the wishes of the council, and laid down a scheme of labour for the National Union, besides giving them words of encouragement, Lord R. Churchill goes on to say :—" The Council, however, committed the serious error of imagining that your lordship and Sir Stafford Northcote were in earnest in wishing them to become a real source of usefulness to the party. . . . . The Council have been rudely undeceived. . . . . I received a letter from Mr. Bartley, the paid agent of the leaders, written under their direction, containing a formal notice to the National Union to quit the premises occu-

pied by them in conjunction with the other organizing officials, accompanied by a statement that the leaders declined for the future all and any responsibility for the proceedings of the National Union. Further, in your letter of the 1st inst., you express your disapproval of the action of the Council, and decline to consider its report on the ground that the contemplated action of the Council will trench upon the functions of an amorphous and unknown body, styled the 'Central Committee,' in whose hands all matters hitherto disposed of by the leaders and whips of the party must remain, including the expenditure of the party funds. . . . Finally, in order that the Council of the National Union may be completely and for ever reduced to its ancient condition of dependence upon and servility to certain irresponsible persons who find favour in your eyes, you demand that the whips of the party—meaning, we suppose, Lord Skermersdale, Lord Hawarden, Lord Hopetoun, in the Lords; Mr. Rowland Winn, Mr. Thornhill in the Commons—should sit *ex-officio* on the Council, with a right of being present at the meetings of all Committees. With respect to the last demand, we think it right to state, for the information of your lordship, that, under the rules and constitution of the National Union, the Council have no power whatever to comply with this injunction. The Council are elected at the annual conference, and have no power to add to their number. All they can do is, that in the event of a vacancy occurring among the members, they have power by co-optation to fill up the vacancy . . . . It may be that the powerful and secret influences which have hitherto been unsuccessfully at work on the Council, with the knowledge and consent of your lordship and Sir Stafford Northcote, may at last be effectual in reducing the National Union to its former make-believe and impotent condition; in that case we shall know what steps to take to clear ourselves of all responsibility for the failure of an attempt to avert the misfortunes and reverses which will, we are certain, under the present effete system of wire-pulling and secret organization, overtake and attend the Conservative party at a general election."

However, on May 9th, 1884, it appeared that the split in the Conservative ranks was healed.

There was an attendance of about 170 Conservative members of the House of Commons at the meeting held on that day at the Carlton Club. Sir Stafford Northcote presided, and among the speakers were Sir Richard Cross, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and Lord Randolph Churchill. The special purposes for which the meeting was called were to consider the course which the Opposition should take with reference to the Franchise Bill,

and also in the debate on the Vote of Censure to be moved by Sir M. Hicks-Beach on May 12. On the former subject there was some conversation upon the terms and comparative importance of several amendments of which notice had been given, especially those to be proposed by Lord Claud Hamilton, aimed at the exclusion of Ireland from the Bill. Sir Stafford Northcote stated that he was not prepared to vote for these amendments, and Sir H. Bruce supported him. Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Tottenham, and Mr. King-Harman spoke in an opposite sense. It was ultimately decided that no united action should be taken on this point. With regard to the Egyptian question, it was understood that the debate upon the Vote of Censure should, if possible, be brought to a close on May 13. Lord Randolph Churchill intimated his entire agreement with the course which Sir Stafford Northcote had recommended the party to take upon that matter, as well as in reference to the various amendments in Committee on the Franchise Bill.

In the course of the proceedings no discussion took place upon the differences which had arisen between the Marquis of Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill; but allusion was made to the matter as being then in a fair way for amicable settlement. It was understood that Lord Randolph Churchill had abandoned his intention of taking a holiday abroad, and will take an active part in the debates on the Vote of Censure and the Franchise Bill.

Lord R. Churchill would, the *Daily News* understood, consent to withdraw his resignation of the chairmanship of the Council of Conservative Associations. It was also arranged (the same authority said) that the principle fought for by Lord Randolph Churchill in his correspondence with the Marquis of Salisbury should to a considerable extent be adopted in the relations of the Central Committee with the Conservative associations throughout the country as represented by the Council. The general impression on both sides of the House of Commons was that Lord R. Churchill had secured a substantial victory in his contest with the titular leaders of the party. It was due to overtures directly made from them, that the member for Woodstock consented to forego his intention of seeking temporary retirement, and to renew his official connection with the organization of the Conservative party.

On these events the *Pall Mall Gazette*, May 10th, commented in the following characteristic fashion:

"THE SPLIT HEALED.

"So it was only a comedy after all! Need we blush to confess that, like the unsophisticated majority of mankind, we believed

the fight to have been in good earnest? Not that we ever thought the quarrel would last. Sooner or later, everybody felt, the mutually indispensable Incompatibles would fall into one another's arms, and the Aristocratico-Democratic Conservative party of the future would march united—no matter in what direction—under the Salisbury-Churchill Joint Control. The union of opposites, we know, is, according to a famous philosophy, an essential of the most perfect existence. The Conservative party, we have always felt, was bent on realising this high ideal in an imperfect world, and there is no cause for astonishment except the discovery that the thing is really so simple. From a dramatic point of view, indeed, the ease and rapidity with which all difficulties have been got over is somewhat inartistic. To produce its due effect this reconciliation scene should have been deferred. Its introduction now, directly after the quarrel, gives the impression that the whole incident was, to use an eloquent and favourite phrase of one of the chief actors, 'all humbug,' and converts what ought to have been a stately historical drama of several acts into a sorry farce of one. But the stern exigencies of political warfare care little for dramatic effects or individual reputations. At whatever risk of personal ridicule, the Tory chiefs were bound to make up their deadly quarrel sharp, in order to present a united front upon the Vote of Censure debate next week. We are not sorry that such a united front is to be presented. Nothing, let it be frankly confessed, would be more injurious to the best interests of the country than that the Ministry should be in a position to despise the Opposition, especially at a time when they themselves greatly need keeping up to the mark. It is not for us to complain because there is once more, if only for the time being, a united Opposition, or even because its unity has been achieved in a manner which makes the Opposition chiefs look just a trifle ridiculous. What has actually occurred? It is no use asking the Tory papers. They have got one another by the ears, and are too busy bandying reproaches as to who is to blame for the emphasis and publicity given to the recent quarrel, to devote any time to satisfying the curiosity of the public. The dissention in the Tory camp, indeed, seems rather to have changed its venue than to have been exorcised altogether. Montague and Capulet may have sworn a truce, and may even be feasting together, but their respective retainers are still carrying on their quarrel in the streets, and have discovered a new subject of dispute in the interesting problem which of their masters has given in. Has Lord Randolph apologised to Lord Salisbury, or has Lord Salisbury made concessions and held out promises to Lord

Randolph? From a personal point of view, the question is an attractive one, and will no doubt fill many pages in the biographical and memorial literature of the future. But there are other issues involved which are at least as interesting and far more important than the extent of the retractation demanded of, or the size of the bait held out to, the young Tory free-lance. How long will the new alliance last? and if it does last, what does it portend for the future of our political life? The dispute, let it be remembered, was no merely accidental or personal one. It was the recognition of two wholly conflicting principles in the heart of the Tory party. Their collision may well be concealed or postponed for a while, but if it is not to break out again and again till it finally ends in disruption, it can only be by a hitherto unparalleled sacrifice of political conscience to party exigencies. Even on the question of the hour there is the greatest difference between the opinions of Lord Salisbury and those of Lord Randolph Churchill. The latter has avowed his belief in Egypt for the Egyptians; the former barely conceals his desire of annexation. They may both agree in denouncing the policy of the Government—it is not very hard for people to agree about that—but were they to venture on the more dangerous ground of laying down a policy of their own, they would be found to be as far apart as the poles. The combination which will attack the Government on Monday night is an alliance of the two extremes against the middle, and it is the consciousness of this, the consciousness that if they were in office to-morrow the Conservatives would either have no policy at all or two conflicting policies, which prevents many Englishmen even now, deeply disappointed as they are with the conduct of the Government, from wishing to see it displaced. But this is only an instance. The question is whether a majority of the English people will ever be able in the long run to trust so insecure a conglomerate as the new Salisbury-Churchill Toryism is bound to be.

"These things, however, lie in the lap of the future. As far as the problem of the hour and the debate of next week are concerned we can only rejoice over what took place yesterday at the Carlton. However insincere the Conservative reconciliation may be, it does make the Opposition for the time being more formidable than it looked a day or two ago. And the more formidable the Opposition, the more likely are the Ministry to go a long way to conciliate those Liberals—and they are worth conciliating—who may withhold their support unless the Government now at the eleventh hour, recognises, practically and not in words merely, its responsibility for Gordon and for the men whom he has induced to trust to him and to England. And that is all for the good."

On May 16th, 1884, Lord Randolph Churchill was re-elected unanimously Chairman of the National Union of Conservative Associations, and on this the *Pall Mall Gazette* commented as follows in an article entitled—

"A TRIPARTITE CONTROL.

"The unanimous re-election yesterday of Lord Randolph Churchill as Chairman of the National Union of Conservative Associations is a notable event. First and foremost, it is a great personal triumph for the Member for Woodstock. He has done his best to make himself impossible, and he has failed. It is an impossibility to do without him. The Opposition has capitulated to the Mahdi of Birmingham, as the garrison at Fascher is said to have capitulated to the Mahdi of Obeid. This is a great victory indeed, and one over which Lord Randolph Churchill may fairly exult. He played a bold game, and he has won it with an ease at which those who remember the long and toilsome struggles of Mr. Disraeli stand amazed. Many things have changed since then, and among others the power of the patricians to hold their own against the encroachments of the plebs. For the triumph of Lord Randolph Churchill is distinctly the victory of the demagogue or leader and spokesman of the populace over the aristocratic guardians of a system of caste ascendancy.

"It was in February when the dissensions which have at least been temporarily composed first came to the surface. The crisis took the shape of a protest against the Dual Control as a source of weakness. Mr. Howarth and other fighting Tories asked indignantly, how a party could be led with singleness of aim which suffered from a dual leadership? The Opposition it was said demanded vigour, and it found nothing but 'continually halting policies and continually mistaken tactics.' How can you have unity of purpose when you have a duality of control? Therefore, the cry was that the dual control had broken down, and must be succeeded by the single leadership of Lord Salisbury, who, it was added, somewhat oddly, should appoint Lord Randolph Churchill as his 'whole-hearted lieutenant' in the Commons. As the 'whole-hearted lieutenant' was then almost at daggers drawn with the nobleman who was to act as his chief, the suggestion was certainly infelicitous. Since then the situation has developed somewhat, and now we have a strange spectacle. The Dual Control, which was denounced because it led to division of counsels, and was incompatible with unity of purpose, is now replaced, not by the leadership of one strong man, but by a Tripartite Control. The Opposition will be governed by a triumvirate, for Lord Randolph Churchill is

now one of its recognised chiefs. Whether that will conduce to unity, harmony, and decision, time will show. But that he must henceforth be reckoned with as one of the leaders of his party can no longer be disputed. One can hardly help feeling sorry for Sir Stafford Northcote, sandwiched like a helpless fellah between the Mahdi of Birmingham and the Zebehr of the House of Lords. He may act as a buffer between his two partners, or he may be ground to powder between the upper and nether millstones. He will probably begin by being the lubricant of the machine, and afterwards, if he should perchance develop any grit, he will be crushed. His position is not an enviable one. For Lord Randolph Churchill the change is one of pure gain. Not only is he allowed to have an equal share of power with his late chiefs, but he by that fact is subjected to a control which he sadly needs. There is hope now for the member for Woodstock. The unrestrained exuberance of his rhetoric will no longer be allowed to run to waste. The task of civilizing him will be taken in hand in earnest, and before long we hope that the pressure of responsibility and the prospect of power may exorcise both the brutality and the impishness which have hitherto marred so many of his speeches. We have always predicted his success, but it has come sooner than we anticipated. If it sobers him he has a great career before him. If, on the contrary, it turns his head, then, alas! the last state of the Conservative party will be worst than the first.

"It is impossible to speculate as to the future of the Conservative party under the Tripartite Control without being reminded that before very long our own party will probably be in much the same condition. There is, indeed, a striking resemblance between the recent crisis in the Conservative camp and the memorable occasion on which Mr. Chamberlain revolted against the leadership of Lord Hartington. It was when the House was in Committee on the flogging question that Mr. Chamberlain sneered at Lord Hartington as 'the late leader of the party,' and everyone remembers how suddenly 'the late leader' resumed his leadership by consenting to follow. Lord Randolph Churchill's breach with his chief has been much more serious, and the capitulation of Lord Salisbury has been much more humiliating. The chief interest, however, lies, not in the past, but in the future. The elimination of Sir Stafford Northcote will probably have taken place when Lord Hartington goes to the Upper House. We shall then see each of the two great parties in the State under a dual control—the Conservatives under the Marquis of Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill, and the Liberals under the Duke of Devonshire and Mr.

Chamberlain. It will be generally felt that in such a case the Liberals will not have the worst of it. No one can doubt that in Lord Hartington we have a leader far more sagacious and resolute than the imperious and vacillating Marquis. Nor can any one deny that in most of the qualities which enable English statesmen to command the support of their countrymen Mr. Chamberlain has nothing to fear from comparison with Lord Randolph Churchill. For business capacity, administrative genius, and self-command, Lord Randolph Churchill is not even in the running with the President of the Board of Trade. It is somewhat strange that both the men who seem destined to be the rival leaders of our democracy are singularly devoid of that idealism which, in the case of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, has ever been the secret of their strength with the people; but that, we suppose, is the 'defect of their qualities,' for it is difficult to combine a supreme devotion to the attainment of a personal ambition with a disinterested enthusiasm for a lofty ideal. But in this respect also Mr. Chamberlain has nothing to fear from comparison with the accepted heir to the Tory leadership."

This controversy settled, Lord Randolph Churchill took a course of his own with reference to Mr. Brodrick's amendment on the Franchise Bill (20th May, 1884). In fact, he supported the Government. His attitude occasioned some surprise, which is well emphasised by the *Pall Mall Gazette* as follows :—

"The Conservative chanticleer has crowed too soon and too loud over the supposed reconciliation of Lord Randolph Churchill and the leaders of his party. Yesterday afternoon saw Lord Randolph once more in open revolt. The fact is that the little difference of opinion as to who was the yielding party in the old quarrel has come very near to producing a new one. Lord Salisbury and his friends seem to believe that Lord Randolph gave in, and made apology and obeisance to his superiors as a dutiful Tory should. Lord Randolph and his followers, and the public, on the other hand, are under the impression that the Member for Woodstock had the best of it. After so grave an act of insubordination as his letter to Lord Salisbury, a merely formal submission, such as Lord Randolph's was, is generally considered as a substantial victory, and this idea has been confirmed by his unanimous re-election to the chairmanship of the Manchester Union. But since the Tory regulars still persist in it that Lord Randolph has been tamed, and is going to be a good boy in the future, it is necessary, he seems to think, to take some strong measures to convince them of their delusion. The debate of yesterday should do something to open their eyes."

There can be but little doubt that Lord Randolph Churchill enjoys in a large degree popularity with the democracy of England, that he has displayed, remarkably, audacity and astuteness, and that his career promises to be a great one, bright with youth and with the hope that he may rescue his country from the enervating clutches of verbose senility.

ELECTORAL ADDRESSES AND SPEECHES.
1874 TO 1880.

Lord Randolph Churchill's address to the electors of Woodstock, in view of the General Election, 1874.

On Saturday, the 24th of January, 1874, the country was startled by the address of Mr. Gladstone to his constituents at Greenwich announcing the Queen's intention to dissolve Parliament. Lord Randolph Churchill immediately issued the following address :—

"TO THE ELECTORS OF THE BOROUGH OF NEW WOODSTOCK.

"GENTLEMEN,—I gladly avail myself of the opportunity afforded me by the retirement of your late member, Mr. Barnett, to offer myself as your Representative in the coming Parliament.

"The politics I profess are strictly in accordance with those of the great leaders of the Conservative Party which the Borough of Woodstock has now so long supported.

"Many questions of great politicai importance which formerly divided the Conservative from the Liberal Party, have passed for the present out of the field of conflict ; their settlement, whether for good or evil, being now stamped on the face of our Statute Book. The essential features of the Constitution of this Country continue, however, to defy the attacks of extreme Reformers. All legislation should, in my opinion, be based strictly on the outlines of these features, which are capable of being developed and expanded in accordance with the demands of a progressive age.

"Any measures that would ameliorate the condition of the working classes would ensure my best and most earnest assistance. My desire would be to place at their disposal, if it

were possible, the common necessaries and comforts of life free from the prohibitory impost of taxation.

"Some reforms of the systems of rating and local taxation are much required. This subject, however, I hold to be one which should be dealt with largely in one comprehensive measure, and not piecemeal or by small instalments after the manner of recent futile attempts.

"Legislation tending to the severance of the Established Church from the State, would be vigorously opposed by me. On the other hand, measures which would increase the great sphere of usefulness of the Church of England, and render her more and more the Church of the nation, I would as vigorously support.

"With regard to Foreign Policy, it is impossible to blind oneself to the fact that the position of England among Foreign nations has deteriorated in the hands of the recent Liberal Administration. While deprecating unnecessary interference in Continental affairs, I am of opinion that in cases where the honour of our country is implicated, the security of the nation can only be attained by a bold and uncompromising policy. To that end I should oppose any large reduction of our naval and military establishments. An economical policy might, however, be consistently pursued, and the efficiency of our forces by land and sea completely secured, without the enormous charges now laid upon the country.

"The Colonial Empire of Great Britain, offering as it does a field of development for the talent, energy, and labour of the sons of our overburdened island, will continually demand the attention of the Legislature. I would support all efforts which would tend to facilitate the means of emigration, and would at the same time strengthen and consolidate the ties which unite the Colonies with the mother country.

"With regard to education, both in this country and in Ireland, I am of opinion that the existing means are capable of a large and liberal development, and that while the rights of conscience should be most sacredly respected, religious teaching should not wholly be forgotten.

"The Education Act of 1871 has, on the whole, successfully settled the question, and opened the doors of knowledge to all our countrymen, without regard to sect. I agree with the spirit of that Act, but any alterations that may be needful to ensure its more perfect working will always receive my best consideration.

"The principles of true Conservatism I hold to be those of gradual, unceasing progress, adhering strictly to the lines of a well-founded Constitut on, and avoiding allviolent and unneces-

sary changes. It is in these principles, in which I firmly believe myself, that I aspire in hopeful confidence to become the Representative of the Electors of the Borough of Woodstock.

"Should I be so fortunate as to be successful in gaining your confidence, I can safely promise that the interests of the Borough will not suffer from any neglect at my hands, and the wishes and views of every individual member of the Constituency, of whatever political party, will always receive my best and most earnest attention.

"I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

"Yours, very faithfully,

"RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.

"*Woodstock, 26th January*, 1874."

At the close of the General Election, 1874, Lord R. Churchill issued the following address to his constituents :—

"TO THE ELECTORS OF THE BOROUGH OF NEW WOODSTOCK.

"GENTLEMEN.—We have fought a hard fight, and the Conservative cause has gained a glorious, triumphant, and decisive victory.

"The result of the poll has realised my best hopes, and placed me in the proud position of being your representative in Parliament.

"To those who have so energetically contributed to this result, I beg to tender my sincere thanks. The majority of those who promised me their support have fully and honourably redeemed their promises. I hope I may be as successful in redeeming mine. I shall ever strive most scrupulously to watch over the interests, and most carefully to guard the rights of, your ancient Borough.

"I have promised to endeavour to promote the well-being and the general prosperity of the agricultural labourer. I shall not go back from that pledge; and every possible improvement in his condition will ever secure my closest attention.

"It was with no extreme party feelings that I began this contest, but with a sincere hope that political difference of opinion might afford no ground for private animosity; and I hope that in time every individual elector may be not only my political supporter, but my personal friend.

"The number of voters who have voted at this election is a strong demonstration of the vitality of the constituency, and of

the vivid interest felt by all classes in the privilege of possessing a representative of their political views, a defender of their civil and municipal rights. I trust that the day may be far distant when the Borough of Woodstock, through any change in the electoral basis, will be menaced by the loss of its Member.

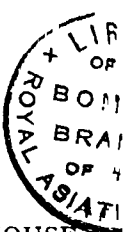
"Gentlemen, it is the highest gratification to me to have been chosen by the free and unbiassed votes of the electors, and to satisfy their wishes and justify their choice will be the constant ambition of

"Your obedient servant,

"Blenheim Palace, "RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.
"3rd February, 1874."

Lord Randolph Churchill was opposed by the Hon. G. Brodrick, Liberal. At the close of the polling the figures stood as follows :—

Lord R. Churchill (C)	...	...	569
Hon. G. Brodrick (L)	...	...	404
Majority for Lord R. Churchill...			165



LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1874-78.

On May 22nd, Lord Randolph Churchill made his first speech on a motion for a Committee of the House on the question of forming a military depôt at Oxford, which he strongly opposed, regarding it as a serious matter for Oxford to have its ancient university turned into something resembling a modern garrison town, mingling learned professors and thoughtful students with roystering soldiers and licentious camp followers, tending to the demoralizing of its ancient institutions. This was the only speech made by the noble lord in this his maiden session, but it was delivered with such telling effect that Sir William Harcourt remarked that the House of Commons could not but welcome a new member "who had exhibited such ability as the noble lord had just displayed."

He does not appear to have made any further speech during this session.

On March 12th, 1875, Mr. O'Connor Power, in calling attention to the case of the Irish State prisoners, said : "Had not Churchill broken his oath to his sovereign James, and gone

over to the king whom honourable gentlemen opposite delighted to honour; and did not the pious and immortal William, Prince of Orange, make him Duke of Marlborough as a reward for his perfidy?"

Lord Randolph Churchill replied: I must remind the honourable member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) that he is entirely mistaken in his reading of the history of the first Duke of Marlborough. The honourable member has stated that Churchill was rewarded for his treachery by having the Dukedom of Marlborough conferred upon him by the Prince of Orange. Now, as a matter of fact, the so-called treachery of Churchill was one of the most disputed historical questions, whereas the treachery of these soldiers was not disputed. The Dukedom was not conferred as the reward of treachery, nor was it conferred by King William, but by Queen Anne, as a reward for his services at the victory of Blenheim.' I take this opportunity of advising the honourable member for Mayo to inform himself of the commonest facts of history before again aspersing the character of heroes whom the country reveres.

On May 28th, 1875, Sir Charles Dilke moved for papers on the subject of unreformed Borough Corporations, pointedly including the Borough of Woodstock.

Lord Randolph Churchill defended his borough, and said: It is with considerable amusement that I have listened to the speech of the honourable baronet. His manner had been so mysterious and alarming that he had led the House to suppose that he had some terrible tale of vice, immorality, and crime to divulge againt the Corporation of Woodstock, and the other unhappy boroughs against which the motion was directed. Now, however, that the thunderstorm which has been gathering over our heads has burst, it had not done very much damage.

After defending Woodstock in detail from the charges made against it, the noble lord said: The honourable baronet's constituents have a right to expect better things from him than the cruel vivisection of an unfortunate mayor and a few poor aldermen. I wonder that my honourable friend does not desist from these trifling little attacks, these petty onslaughts on corporations and institutions which are as harmless as they are ancient, as unobtrusive as they are respectable and respected. I wonder that my honourable friend does not devote his great and acknowledged talent to the attainment of some higher object, and to the pursuit of some worthier game.

On June 11th, 1877, his lordship spoke respecting the grant

of £1,582 for Queen's Plates in Ireland, but the speech, though fiery, is of no general interest.

On March 7th, 1878, his lordship spoke seconding the motion of Mr. Rylands on the County Government Bill. On Mr. Sclater Booth* moving "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair," Mr. Rylands moved "That the House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into said Committee." Lord Churchill made a cutting speech, and rather astonished the House by his taking part against the Government. (See Daily Papers of March 8th, 1878.)

On April 3rd, 1878, Lord Churchill spoke against the Second Reading of the Vaccination Law (Penalties) Bill, characterising it as an attempt to multiply the whole of the Vaccination Laws. A society had been formed called the Anti-Vaccination Society, and this pernicious organization flooded the country with every kind of lying literature. He would move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

On June 4th, 1878, Lord Randolph Churchill moved for a Select Committee on Endowed Schools (Ireland), which he supported in a speech of considerable length, and bristling with statistics. The motion was, however, by leave withdrawn, on the condition that there should be a Commission to inquire into the subject of the management of the property.

On July 9th, 1878, he spoke in favour of an inquiry into the working of the Irish Land Act of 1870, which he denounced as the most revolutionary act ever passed in this generation, for it dealt with all the conceivable notions of the rights of property in a most extraordinary manner.

On March 8th, 1880, the late Earl of Beaconsfield addressed the subjoined letter to the late Duke of Marlborough, the father of Lord Randolph Churchill. The letter was an announcement of the Dissolution and General Election of 1880 :—

"THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

10, Downing Street, March 8th, 1880.

"MY LORD DUKE,—The measures respecting the state of Ireland, which her Majesty's Government so anxiously considered with your Excellency, and in which they were much aided by your advice and authority, are now about to be submitted for the Royal Assent, and it is at length in the power of

* For whose Life see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 2.

the Ministers to advise the Queen to recur to the sense of her people. The arts of agitators, which represented that England, instead of being the generous and sympathising friend, was indifferent to the dangers and the sufferings of Ireland, have been defeated by the measures, at once liberal and prudent, which Parliament has almost unanimously sanctioned.

"During the six years of the present Administration, the improvement of Ireland and the content of our fellow-countrymen in that island have much occupied the care of the Ministry, and they may remember with satisfaction, that in this period they have solved one of the most difficult problems connected with its government and people, by establishing a system of public education open to all classes and all creeds.

"Nevertheless, a danger, in its ultimate results, scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine, and which now engages your Excellency's anxious attention, distracts that country. A portion of its population is attempting to sever the Constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both.

"It is to be hoped that all men of light and leading will resist this destructive doctrine. The strength of this nation depends on the unity of feeling which should pervade the United Kingdom and its wide-spread Dependencies. The first duty of an English Minister should be to consolidate that co-operation which renders irresistible a community educated, as our own, in an equal love of liberty and law.

"And yet there are some who challenge the expediency of the Imperial character of this realm. Having attempted, and failed, to enfeeble our Colonies by their policy of decomposition, they may perhaps now recognise in the disintegration of the United Kingdom a mode which will not only accomplish but precipitate their purpose.

"The immediate Dissolution of Parliament will afford an opportunity to the nation to decide upon a course which will materially influence its future fortunes and shape its destiny.

"Rarely in this century has there been an occasion more critical. The power of England and the peace of Europe will largely depend on the verdict of the country. Her Majesty's present Ministers have hitherto been enabled to secure that peace, so necessary to the welfare of all civilised countries, and so peculiarly the interest of our own. But this ineffable blessing cannot be obtained by the passive principle of non-interference. Peace rests on the presence, not to say the ascendancy, of England in the Councils of Europe. Even at this moment, the doubt, supposed to be inseparable from popular election, if it does not diminish, certainly arrests her influence,

and is a main reason for not delaying an appeal to the national voice. Whatever may be its consequence to her Majesty's present advisers, may it return to Westminster a Parliament not unworthy of the power of England, and resolved to maintain it!

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord Duke,
"Your faithful Servant,
"BEACONSFIELD.

"His Excellency
"The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, K.G."

Like other candidates for Parliamentary honours, Lord Randolph Churchill issued an address to his constituents in 1880, and the subjoined is the text of his appeal for their suffrages:—

"TO THE ELECTORS OF THE BOROUGH OF WOODSTOCK.

"Gentlemen,—Parliament is about to be dissolved, and I venture again to solicit a renewal of your confidence, which for six years I have enjoyed.

"When in 1874 you did me the honour to return me as your Representative to the House of Commons, I pledged myself to give a general support to the policy and the principles of the Conservative Party.

"And now that I again offer myself as a Candidate for the borough I confidently appeal to you on the same grounds, renewing my former pledges.

"The attention of the Parliament which is about to expire has been chiefly occupied by momentous questions of Foreign Policy involving almost the existence of the Empire.

"Her Majesty's Government have had to contend not only against the dangerous ambition of a great Foreign Power but also against a determined and powerfully led Opposition at home.

"By repeated and unusually large majorities the policy which the Government pursued has been sanctioned by Parliament. A few weeks will surely demonstrate that it has been approved by the country.

"In giving a consistent support to that policy I am convinced that I have been carrying out the wishes of a vast majority of this constituency, and I believe that the safety of

this Empire can only be secured by a firm adherence on the part of the country to the course pursued by the present advisers of the Crown.

"To their credit it may be stated, that they have hitherto achieved the great result of 'peace with honour' without having added perceptibly to the burdens imposed upon the people by taxation.

"My opinions on domestic matters have been more than once stated to you during the six years which have elapsed since my election in 1874. The Conservative party have been instrumental in placing on the Statute Book many comprehensive and useful measures. I would instance the Act to Consolidate and Amend the Law relating to Friendly Societies; the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act; the Act Consolidating and Extending the various Laws relating to the Sanitary Condition of the People; the Act for Modifying and Improving according to Modern Experience the Regulations affecting the Discipline and Control of our Army; and other Statutes which I need not now particularize.

"Her Majesty's Government have now in hand carefully considered measures for the consolidation of the Criminal Code, and for the improvement of the Law of Bankruptcy; also three most important measures relating to the settlement of landed estates, enlarging the powers of life owners, and reducing the cost of land transfer, to which, as you may imagine from my remarks to you in the autumn, I shall be prepared, if you return me as your Member, to give a most cordial support.

"The present condition of Ireland must be a cause of uneasiness to every thoughtful person, and will no doubt occupy the anxious consideration of the new Parliament.

"The party led by Mr. Parnell, which has for its object the disintegration of the United Kingdom, must, in my opinion, be resisted at all costs.

"At the same time, I do not see how the internal peace of Ireland can be permanently secured without a judicious reconsideration of the laws affecting the tenure of land; and should measures with that object be introduced by her Majesty's Government, I shall be inclined to give them an unprejudiced support.

"It must not be forgotten that the successful and wise solution of the difficulties surrounding the question of Irish education effected by ministers and the Conservative party will greatly contribute to the rapid progress of a future prosperity of the sister Island.

"I am in favour of the present system of County Government by Quarter Sessions, but I think that the hands of the magis-

trates might be strengthened by the addition of elected representatives of the ratepayers.-

"The contribution from the Imperial revenue to the expenses of Local Government, which was the work of the Conservative party, has no doubt proved a boon to the agricultural community. I should be glad to see this principle further carried out by throwing a portion of the cost of maintenance of highways upon the moneys annually voted by Parliament.

"To secure the freedom and to encourage the enterprise of the tenant farmer, it would be expedient to abolish the Law of Distress in its present form.

"It appears to me that all matters dealt with by that law should be a subject of agreement between landlord and tenant.

"I shall heartily co-operate with any party which brings forward carefully considered measures for the amelioration of the condition of the agricultural labourer, and I think it would be well if powers were given to municipalities and local bodies for the purchase of land to be let in allotments, and for the improvement of the dwellings of this valuable class of men.

"Trusting that the principles above enunciated will commend themselves to your consideration, and will secure your approval,

"I have the honour to remain,

"Very faithfully yours,

"RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.

"*Woodstock, 9th March*, 1880."

At this election his lordship was opposed by Mr. Wm. Hall, of Penstone, Lancing, Essex, in the Liberal interest. The figures after the polling stood thus :

Churchill	...	...	512
Hall	...	...	452
Majority for Lord R. Churchill			60

SPEECH AT WOODSTOCK, MARCH 15TH, 1880.

LORD R. CHURCHILL, who was very enthusiastically received, said :—Ladies and gentlemen, I have to thank you for the compliment you have paid me in coming here to-night in such numbers to hear my opinions on the political questions of the day. It is exactly six years since I addressed a similar meeting in this Town Hall, and many great and important events have taken place in that interval. I must own I admire the perseverance and courage of the Liberal party in Woodstock. Like true Englishmen they never know when they are beaten. They

refuse to recognise such a thing as failure. I thought after the splendid victory which the Conservative party in this borough won six years ago, that we might have been left in peaceful possession of the field. (Hear, hear.) But no, the Liberals are up again, as lively as ever, and they have brought forward another candidate in the person of Mr. Hall. Now I have no personal difference with Mr. Hall, and I gladly acknowledge his right to contest the representation of this borough; in fact, I compliment him on his good sense and good taste in being ambitious of representing you. I have had the honour of being introduced to him, and I certainly could not desire a better or more worthy opponent. I saw the other day a very interesting document, which has been distributed among the electors, purporting to be a biography of Mr. Hall. (Laughter.) Well now, ladies and gentlemen, biographies are always very interesting reading, but I could not help thinking as I read that document, that in this respect I had perhaps a slight advantage over Mr. Hall, in that it was not necessary for me to distribute amongst the electors of Woodstock a biography of myself. (Cheers.) For many years now the electors of this borough have known me. (Cheers.) All my life and actions are within your recollection; and good or bad, as the case may be, you have had every opportunity of arriving at a true and accurate judgment—(cheers)—and certainly, if I may recall the many kindnesses I have received from all of you, and the many invaluable friendships which I have formed amongst you, I would almost venture to think that your judgment has not been a harsh one. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I cannot say that I altogether regret that on this occasion there is a prospect of a sharp contest in this borough. Very momentous issues are before the constituencies. Now, you know, small boroughs like this one are often accused by their enemies of being apathetic in political affairs, and of want of independence of opinion. There cannot be a doubt that in the future, particularly when the Liberal party return to power, whatever time that may be —(cheers and laughter)—there will be a very dangerous attack made on the existence of small constituencies; and when that time comes, whoever may have the honour of representing you, be it myself or be it Mr. Hall, will be able to say that, far from ever being apathetic on political questions, or far from taking no interest in the controversies which agitate other constituencies, the electors of Woodstock take the keenest interest in the affairs of the Empire at home and abroad, and that they are a body of men, trained, exercised, and skilful in political discussion. (Cheers.) Well, gentlemen, the six years which have elapsed since 1874 have been critical and trying times for the

community. (Hear, hear.) The extraordinary prosperity which distinguished the former years had begun to decline when the Conservative administration succeeded to power. Over-speculation, unhealthy commercial excitement, rash and improvident enterprise, which marked the years of office of the Liberal administration, and which, I must say, I think was in a great measure stimulated by Mr. Gladstone's sensational finance, had produced an inevitable reaction, and a general collapse of credit. (Hear, hear.) This was one of the first difficulties with which the Conservative Government had to contend. The consequent depression of trade, the succession of unfavourable seasons, which culminated last summer, were the cause of a declining revenue and successive deficits. Well gentlemen, in spite of all this, what do we find? Why, the taxes borne by the country are not one penny higher, and are as easily borne as in any year of Mr. Gladstone's wonderful financial administration, which I should be the last to decry. (Cheers.) Well, but my opponents will say, that is all very well, but the Conservative Government don't pay their debts. Now, is that so? Conservative finance is the favourite butt of the Opposition; but Sir Stafford Northcote, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has managed, during these six years of unexampled depression and general distress, to pay off eighteen millions of the National Debt (cheers); and not only has he done that, but he has also managed to contribute from the Imperial revenue nearly one million a year to the expenses of local government; and, in addition, he has relieved the county rates from the heavy expense of the maintenance of the prisons; and he has done all this without imposing one single sixpence heavier taxation than what the country paid during the tenure of power by the Liberal party. (Cheers.) But then my opponents will probably say to me, "Oh yes, it is all very well; but you have eight millions of accumulated deficit to pay for." Well, what do these eight millions represent? They represent extraordinary expenditure incurred by the Government, or rather by the country, in carrying out a policy which provided—at a very dangerous crisis—for the defence of the empire and of British interests, and for the security of our colonies, and for the defence of the frontiers of our Indian Empire. (Cheers.) And mark this, gentlemen, that by the end of 1885 all that extraordinary expenditure, the benefit of which will be reaped by posterity as well as by ourselves, will be paid off, will have been liquidated, without the imposition of a single additional sixpence. (Cheers.) Perhaps I ought not to have said one single sixpence, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer certainly did give notice the other night of a new tax, but it was one which would not affect you or me, because it is a

slight increase in the probate duty. The fact will be this: if any of you in this room may have a friend who is likely to leave him a couple of thousand pounds, instead of having to pay £40, you will have to pay £44. I know this, if any of you gentlemen are likely to leave me £2,000 I will very gladly pay £44 instead of £40. (Cheers and laughter.) Of course, if the sum was larger, if very rich successions are involved, the expenses of succession will be higher; and it seems to be a fair principle of making the rich pay, and sparing the poor as far as possible. (Cheers.) Now those are the fact of Conservative finance, and I leave them to my opponents, to make what they can of them. I am content to rest the case of the Government and the Conservative party on those facts. (Loud cheers.) Now we are always being told that the Government has done nothing for the labouring classes. I have no hesitation in saying this is a most unfounded accusation. For whose benefit was the Friendly Societies' Act passed? Why, for the labouring classes; and the effect of this measure is that the weekly earnings of the labouring classes, which, by the means of Friendly Societies, are saved up and laid by to provide for them in sickness, old age, or death, are now placed under Government supervision, and, to a certain extent, under Government control, so that any maladministration or mismanagement by the officers of Friendly Societies of these invaluable funds is, to a great extent, prevented and provided against, as far as it is humanly possible to prevent it; and any labouring man can now, if he takes the trouble, easily ascertain what is the exact financial position of any Friendly Society to which he belongs or wishes to belong. (Cheers.) Well now, that was not a sensational measure; perhaps it is not a measure that could commend itself to the Liberal party; but it is one of those quiet measures of doing good for which the Conservative Government and the Conservative party may claim credit at your hands. (Cheers.) Well now, I should like to ask you what was the nature of the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act. Why, gentlemen, by this Act the fearful and terrible holes and tenements in which many hundreds and thousands of our valuable industrial classes were living in our large towns were swept away, and new wholesome airy dwellings were provided for them. (Cheers.) I am one of those who think that the benefits of this Act might easily be beneficially extended to the agricultural labourer by giving similar powers to local boards and rural municipalities (hear, hear), and that the duty of repairing dilapidated or worn-out cottages shall be a duty entrusted to local boards and corporations, and should not be left, as it is now, to the caprice or the capability of any individual landlord. (Cheers.) I have great hopes that,

as the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act is producing great benefits among these classes in our big towns, the principles of the measure may before long be extended to our rural municipalities. (Cheers.) Since I have been round seeing some of my old friends here, I have heard people say, "You did not keep the promises you made at the last election." Well, I said to the gentleman who said that to me, "What promises have I not kept, because you must let me make an explanation." (Hear, hear, and cheers.) He said, "You promised you would give each of us an allotment." (Laughter.) That is a mistake. I said I would support, and did support, any measure which was brought into the House of Commons which would provide that the labouring classes should each of them have an allotment of rather larger size if necessary than they have at present; and my friend, who is a great Liberal—and I am proud to call him my friend—Sir Charles Dilke, brought in a measure in the first session of this Parliament which gave to rural districts like the Corporation of Woodstock powers to raise money upon the security of the rates for the purchase of land in the neighbourhood of villages and towns which could be let to the labouring classes as allotments. I supported that measure—(cheers)—and I intend to support it again. (Renewed cheers.) But if I had come to you and said I would give each of you an allotment, I should have been telling you a most fearful lie, because I have not got an acre of land belonging to me—(cheers and laughter)—and therefore, though it might be my wish, and it is, to see you all provided for in that respect, at any rate those who want it, it is out of my power to take land and provide myself for the wants of the labouring classes; but as far as my voice and vote go in the House of Commons, they have been given, and will be given, in favour of measures to this end. (Cheers.) Again, to whom, I should like to know, are the working classes of this country indebted for the liberty which they enjoy of refreshing themselves from time to time after their heavy daily toil with a glass of good English beer? Why, to the Tory party, and to the Tory party alone. (Cheers.) If the Liberals come into office, you will soon have passed into law Sunday Closing Acts and Permissive and Local Option Bills, which will tyrannise over the liberty of, and further restrict the few privileges and luxuries enjoyed by the working classes. (Hear, hear.) Why, there are Liberals who advocate these measures who assert that the great majority of the working classes of this country are habitual drunkards, and unable to take care of themselves, and must be restrained by law. ("Shame.") Gentlemen, the Tory party have always strenuously opposed these assertions and these principles, and

will continue to resist them, and you owe it to them that such measures, tyrannical and unjust, have not been passed yet. (Cheers.) Well, the assimilation of the county and borough franchise is a very important question, and one which virtually affects the electors of this borough, for the passing into law of this measure will certainly put an end to the existence of Woodstock and other small constituencies. Now, Mr. Hall's opinions on this question are very curious and remarkable. The position of the Tory party on this matter is very clear. (Hear, hear.) We have always contended that it was inexpedient to have a fresh Reform Act so soon after the comprehensive Reform Act which was passed twelve years ago. We said that it was a dangerous thing for a country to be always tampering with and tinkering up the electoral leases on which our Parliamentary representation reposes, and we also said that there did not appear to exist among the unenfranchised population of our counties that burning, irresistible desire for the franchise. There was no agitation on the subject which would justify immediate legislation. But the Conservative party have never said that they feared the results of giving a vote to the agricultural labourer. (Cheers.) I have had some experience of the agricultural labourer, and I certainly have no reason to complain. But listen to what Mr. Hall said at Tackley the other night on this question in his first speech to the electors of Woodstock, in a stronghold of the agricultural labourers, and in a place where, I am told, Mr. Hall has a good many to sympathise with—I mean Tackley. What does he say to them on this question of the assimilation of the county and borough franchise? I took his words from the *Oxford Chronicle*. Mr. Hall said:—"The extension of the county franchise he knew was a subject on which many Liberals felt earnestly. As a Liberal he was prepared to support it, but he could not look forward to it with the anxiety he did to the enfranchisement of the borough populations. He thought it would enfranchise a large mass who, unfortunately, at the present time, were not really fit for its exercise." ("Oh, oh," and laughter.) Well, when I read this, I said to myself, "Mr. Hall, you certainly have brought your pigs to the wrong market." (Cheers and laughter.) Why, who are the principal and the most powerful portion of the electors of the borough of Woodstock? Why, the agricultural labourers. And Mr. Hall comes down here, and in one breath asks the agricultural labourers for their vote, and at another breath tells them that they belong to a class not fit to have a vote—(laughter and cheers)—which is certainly neither kind nor complimentary—(hear, hear)—and I think it would be as well if some explanation were demanded on that

point of Mr. Hall's. (Cheers) Gentlemen, I feel I am taking up too much of your time, and there are many important matters relative to the land and agriculture which I must postpone to another night. I see my opponent, in his address, like the rest of his party, dilates on the disasters which have come upon England during the six years of Conservative administration. Gentlemen, where are the disasters? what are they? Was the battle of Ulundi a disaster when the ferocious and yelling Zulus fell back dismayed before the undaunted squares of British soldiers? (Cheers.) Was that a disaster? Was the capture of the cruel King Cetewayo a disaster? Was the destruction of the Zulu army—that manslaying machine—and the consequent security of our fellow-countrymen in South Africa, was that a disaster? (Cheers.) Was the Treaty of Gundamuk a disaster, which obtained for us the permanent custody of the keys of our Indian Empire? (Cheers.) Was the gallant General Roberts's march on Cabul, and his glorious repulse of the innumerable hordes of fanatical Afghans who assaulted the defences of Sherpur, were those disasters? Was it a disaster, I ask, when 6,000 Indian troops were brought to Malta—thus proving to European nations and the world that England, in addition to her brave soldiers, had at her command thousands of courageous troops who would fight at her call loyally and devotedly for the honour of the British flag. (Loud cheers.) Gentlemen, was it a disaster when the British fleet forced the passage of the Dardanelles, and anchoring in the Golden Horn, arrested under the walls of Constantinople the march of the Russian armies, and snatched the victim from the Cossack's grasp. Was that a disaster, tell me, electors of Woodstock? (Cheers.) Gentlemen, as I said before, I am glad there is an election contest this time in Woodstock. I am very glad that the electors of Woodstock will have an opportunity of pronouncing in an open and unmistakable manner their opinion upon these great questions. (Cheers.) You know there is a party in this country—a powerful party—a party led by men of eminence and ability, who will tell you that we ought to confine our attention to affairs at home, and that the greatest praise which can be won by an English minister, is that foreign affairs shall not be heard of during his tenure of office. I ask you, are these your opinions? (Cheers.) Do you think it possible for any country like our own, with its extended foreign possessions, possessions which exist in every quarter of the globe, with its innumerable, intimate and delicate relations with every civilised and uncivilised race, do you think such a doctrine is practical, rational, or wise? (Cheers.) You and I, in common

with our fellow-subjects, are the inheritors of a mighty Empire—an Empire which represents to you and me, and to millions more, that priceless inheritance of civil and religious liberty which is the proud privilege of Englishmen, and which we value and enjoy, and on the maintenance of which depends the happiness of humanity. (Cheers.) But you must not rest satisfied with the mere charm of possession; you must show yourselves equal to the task of maintaining it. Some empires have been constructed by the marriages of Royal Houses, other empires have been built up by the decay of neighbouring States, but the British Empire was won by the sword of your forefathers, and if you wish to preserve it with all its attendant blessings, the motto on your sword must be "Ready, aye ready." (Cheers.) On these questions, electors of Woodstock, I am confident that you, laying aside all local considerations, all trifling questions, and all petty matters, conscious of the great responsibility which weighs on each individual member, fully prepared to discharge that solemn duty, will record your votes on the polling day as Englishmen, as patriots, and as brave men. If you do so, I have no fear for the result. (Loud and long-continued cheering)

THE BRADLAUGH QUESTION.

THREE SPEECHES BY LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), adjourned debate, May 24th, 1880.

It had been proposed by Sir Henry Drummond Wolff that, in the opinion of the House, Mr. Bradlaugh, member for Northampton, ought not to be allowed to take the oath, and Mr. Gladstone moved as an amendment that it should be referred to a Select Committee to consider and report whether the House had any right to prevent a duly elected member taking his seat who was willing to take the prescribed oath.

Lord R. CHURCHILL said:—It must be a matter of satisfaction to the House that the debate on this matter did not conclude on Friday evening, but that time has been given for the question to be considered in all its bearings, and for its gravity to be appreciated, not only by the House, but by the public out of doors. It is my opinion that the question whether Mr. Bradlaugh should be allowed to take the oath is not one

* For whose Life see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 1.

which can with any propriety be relegated to a Select Committee. There is nothing complicated in the nature of the question. There is no evidence to be taken in regard to matters of fact; it seems to me to be a matter of principle, which ought to be decided by what Lord Beaconsfield once well described as the "unerring instinct of the House of Commons." The question, although a grave one, is a very simple one. It is, Shall the oath of allegiance be administered to an individual who has thought it his duty to publicly declare beforehand, *coram populo*, that the oath of allegiance can have no binding effect upon his conscience, and who tells the House of Commons that the oath is based upon the lowest of superstitions, upon a mummery and a mockery, which are degrading and absurd? That is the position Mr. Bradlaugh has taken up; and I maintain that if the House allows him to take the oath, they will to a certain extent acquiesce in Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions. In this way they would acquiesce—by such a proceeding the House would admit that one of its own members might with right, law, and justice on his side call God to witness that he was a true and loyal subject, and at the same time proclaim that the God whom he called upon was to him an incomprehensible nonentity, and that he would not so call upon Him if it were not for the civil disabilities which would otherwise attach to him. Moreover, he adds, that the taking of an oath cannot affect in any degree his conduct as a member of Parliament. Now, what is the natural result of such an admission? It appears to me that the House will be unable to preserve solemn forms in the efficacy of which it does not sincerely believe, and they cannot sincerely believe solemn forms which they allow to be trampled upon and held up to public scorn by one of their own members. If the House allows the oath of allegiance to be thus treated, and if the House admits that members of the House may declare with all the authority which a Parliamentary position gives, with right, law, and justice on their side, that the words, "So help me, God," are merely a ridiculous and superstitious invocation, utterly devoid of any moral force, then the whole connection between the proceedings of Parliament and a Divine sanction is in danger, and the idea—I may almost say the faith—which has for centuries animated the House of Commons, that its proceedings are under the supervision and will be guided by the wisdom of a Beneficent Providence, loses all its force. It cannot be doubted, and history could prove, that when persons, and even nations, suffered what are declared to be their most cherished convictions to be trampled upon, insulted, and held up to public derision they cannot be far from abandoning those convictions. I do not know how it may be with the Liberal party, but from

the opinions I have been able to gather from many quarters, I am convinced that by a great majority of the people of the country the triumph of Mr. Bradlaugh in this matter will be regarded with feelings of shame and grief. It is not for that, that the Liberal party is placed in a position of such power, and has the confidence of the country given to it; and although the House never has been, and I trust never will be, a place for the discussion of matters of abstract theology or questions of doctrine or dogma, still, on the other hand, hon. members opposite are not returned in such numbers in order that the House of Commons may become a place where the solemn rights and practices of the Christian religion may be safely derided and the existence of a God publicly and with scorn derided. It is a question which must be decided upon general principles chiefly, it is a question in which very great and very vital principles are involved, and we must not allow pettifogging technicalities to be introduced into the discussion by law officers who are apt to confuse the proceedings of this House with the proceedings of the Old Bailey. It has been the proudest boast of the Commons of England, that, however great their political differences may be, they are at any rate united in one sentiment—that of loyalty to the Crown, and they gladly testify to that fact when they take the oath of allegiance at the table. But Mr. Bradlaugh's ideas of loyalty are in one respect analogous to his ideas on religion. They are widely different from ours. In a book which he has written, and which he has endeavoured to circulate far and wide, entitled "The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick," and which I observe has reached a sixth edition, Mr. Bradlaugh has laid down the principle that it is within the inherent competence of the House, without any precedent transaction to justify it, and on its own motion, to vote the deposition of the Royal Family, and to substitute any other form of government which may seem good. I would quote one passage as a fair specimen of the contents of that book:

"I loathe these small German breast-bestarred wanderers, whose only merit is their loving hatred of one another. In their own land they vegetate and wither unnoticed. Here we pay them highly to marry and perpetuate a pauper prince race. If they do nothing, they are good; if they do ill, loyalty gilds the vice till it looks like virtue."

From such sentiments it may be seen that if Mr. Bradlaugh were admitted to take the oath he might base his Parliamentary career on principles which all other hon. members are precluded from entertaining by their belief in the sanctity of that very oath, but which he can adopt in the House and the

country with all possible freedom, because he has declared beforehand that in his eyes the oath is a mere idle form which cannot bind his conscience, and therefore will not govern his principles or guide his conduct. It may be that, even if that is true, no evil can arise from the action of one man; but I take a different view. The oath testifies alike to the sense of loyalty and of religion on the part of a member, both of which are derided by Mr. Bradlaugh; and if, under guidance of the Prime Minister, the House admits him by allowing him to take the oath, it becomes an absolute impossibility that either loyalty or religion can occupy in the minds of members of Parliament or of the English people the same lofty, unshaken, and unassailable position which they have occupied without interruption down to the present day. I cannot think that that will be the policy of the Liberal party; but although it is of course possible that the Conservative party and others who agree with the hon. member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) may be placed in a minority on the question, still they will have the satisfaction of feeling that in the sentiments which they uttered, and in the action which they took upon it, they were in complete accord with an overwhelming majority of the English people. The right hon. member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) seems to think hon. members on the Opposition benches are making an unnecessary fuss over what he emphasized as their oath as distinguished from what he called his affirmation; but what would the right hon. gentleman have felt had Mr. Bradlaugh said: "Well, as I object to a superstitious oath, and as one must be a Quaker or a Moravian to make an affirmation, I hereby declare that I am a member of the Society of Friends, and claim to affirm accordingly"? Would he not have been outraged, and would not the whole Society of Friends have been outraged by such a declaration? There would have been a most withering denunciation on the part of the right hon. gentleman of such a proceeding. Yet the present case is still more serious. The hon. member for Northampton claims to take the oath, and in doing so he outrages all hon. gentlemen who believe in its sanctity and efficacy, just in the same way as he would outrage the Society of Friends by declaring himself to be one of their body for the mere purpose of taking his seat in the House, and claiming to make the affirmation. In this case the hon. member for Northampton outrages the feelings not merely of members of the Church of England or of the Society of Friends, but of all men and women who believe in an Immortal God. As for the rights of the constituents of Northampton, I am not disposed to recommend the House to be very much exercised in the matter. They did not seat this gentleman in

the dark. It is quite true that the morality and the piety of Mr. Bradlaugh are guaranteed to them by the hon. member for Bristol (Mr. Samuel Morley), who is much respected by the great Nonconformist body for his sense of religion and his piety; and it is equally true that the loyalty of Mr. Bradlaugh is guaranteed to them by the right hon. gentleman the Member for Clackmannanshire (Mr. Adams); at the same time, as the right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster told the House the other night, the whole history of this man, political, literary, and religious, was placed before the constituents of Northampton during the heat of an election contest in the minutest detail. I have been told that Mr. Bradlaugh flaunted his opinions before the constituents, who deliberately elected him as their member. On their heads, therefore, must rest the responsibility of any action which this House may take. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has tried to alarm the House by citing the case of John Wilkes; but will the right hon. gentleman assert that there is the slightest analogy between John Wilkes and Mr. Bradlaugh? The House should not suffer itself to be deluded by such chimeras. I hope I shall not be deemed presumptuous if I venture to make an appeal to the right hon. gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government. I have a conviction that there is not any member of the House who views Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions with greater horror and aversion than the First Lord of the Treasury. I will appeal to the right hon. gentleman to abandon the position he has somewhat lightly taken up, and not seek to evade a great question by a transparent and obvious device. The right hon. gentleman has behind him a great majority, which in his hands may, no doubt, be the means of promoting the best and the highest interests of the country. "Do not," I will say to the right hon. gentleman, "let it be in our power to say that the first use you made of that powerful weapon was to mark it with an indelible stain, and that the first time you led the Liberal party through the lobby in this new Parliament was for the purpose of placing on those benches opposite an avowed Atheist, and a professedly disloyal person."

The following speech was made by Lord R. Churchill on Mr. Labouchere's motion for the adjournment of the House on May 13, 1881:—

Lord R. CHURCHILL thought the House would be greatly indebted to those gentlemen through whose proceedings the

House, without knowing it, had been the witness of a carefully conceived and got-up burlesque. The House ought to bear in mind, in considering these matters, that Mr. Bradlaugh had done all he had done under the inspiration of the Prime Minister and his colleagues. (Murmurs and cheers.) The course of events—(loud cries of "Withdraw.")

Mr. A. SULLIVAN rose to a point of order. He did not know whether the noble lord was in order in imputing to the Prime Minister that he had been the inspirer of disorderly courses. (Hear, hear.) He wished to know if such an imputation cast on any member of that House was in order. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. GLADSTONE.—I wish a little to enlarge the appeal of the honourable and learned member for Meath. I, having stated in my place within no great number of days, that I had no communication with Mr. Bradlaugh, I beg to put it to you, Sir, respectfully and directly, whether the noble lord is in order in stating, in direct contradiction to my assertion, that Mr. Bradlaugh has taken all his steps in this matter under the direct inspiration of the Prime Minister and his colleagues. (Loud cheers.)

The SPEAKER.—I am bound to say that, owing to the noise which prevailed at the time the noble lord was speaking, the words spoken by him did not reach my ear. I think, if the words imputed to him were correctly imputed to him, they were quite out of order. (Cheers.)

Lord R. CHURCHILL.—I beg, after the statement of the Prime Minister, to withdraw what I have said. I wish, however, to say that I was in perfect ignorance of the declaration of the Prime Minister. I certainly never intended to insinuate for a moment that the right hon. gentleman had been in collusion with Mr. Bradlaugh. ("Oh," and laughter.) What I had meant was that the course taken by Mr. Bradlaugh had always received the assent of the Government. What has occurred? Mr. Bradlaugh had written a letter to the Speaker, after his removal from the House, which the Speaker, in the exercise of his discretion, had communicated to the House. I saw nothing in that letter which necessitated such a formal communication. It only contained in a more elaborate form what Mr. Bradlaugh had already stated at the table. No doubt Mr. Bradlaugh took that course after conversation with his friends—with friends of great skill and experience—with the view of raising a discussion. The hon. member for Carlisle immediately called the attention of the House to the letter, and gave notice that he should some day give notice of a motion for the rescission of the resolution of the right hon. gentleman the member for North Devon. I think I have explained why I think that the last step taken by

Mr. Bradlaugh could hardly have been taken without communication with some member of the Government. When, on a former occasion, the hon. member for North Warwickshire asked what course the First Lord of the Treasury proposed to take with regard to the Oaths' Bill, the right hon. gentleman replied that he could not say until the House should have come to some decision in connection with the resolution of the hon. baronet the member for Carlisle.

Mr. Newdegate explained that the right hon. gentleman had said that he could not reply to the question because he did not know what would be done in the matter of the resolution of the hon. baronet.

Lord R. CHURCHILL.—I am of opinion that that was substantially the same thing. The difference between the two explanations was such as between tweedledum and tweedledee. I hold that, after the answer of the right hon. gentleman, it was perfectly open to any one to infer that the resolution of the hon. baronet the member for Carlisle was brought forward with the consent of the Government, and that the Government would not proceed with the Oaths' Bill until the House should have decided on that motion. Now, the Government had since ascertained that if the hon. member for Carlisle were to bring forward his motion, it would be rejected by a large majority. That being so, the hon. member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), though deeply interested in the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh, appealed to the member for Carlisle not to bring forward his resolution. Why had the hon. member for Northampton followed that course? Because the Government were unwilling to support the resolution which the House intended to reject. The whole transaction, as I have said, was a carefully arranged burlesque. A fly had, as it were, been thrown over the House, in the hope of ascertaining whether Mr. Bradlaugh could not, by hook or by crook, gain admission into their ranks. Now, the member for Carlisle said he would hold his resolution *in terrorem* over the House. But Mr. Speaker had already ruled that that motion had a privileged character, and there was no doubt that the very essence of privilege was its urgency. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, unless the motion of the hon. member for Carlisle were proceeded with at once, it must entirely lose its privileged character. Upon this point I wish for the Speaker's ruling. From the First Lord of the Treasury I desire to have an intimation as to the intentions of the Government with regard to the Oaths' Bill. Will the Bill be postponed until the Greek Kalends, or will it be brought forward without delay? The action taken by Mr. Bradlaugh having been based entirely

on the prudent advice of the law officers of the Crown, I quite think that the Government must either pass a Bill of indemnity in Mr. Bradlaugh's favour or put down a vote for him in the Estimates. (Laughter.) Turning to another point, I draw attention to the resolution under which Mr. Bradlaugh was allowed by the House to affirm. At the instigation of the First Lord of the Treasury, that resolution had been placed among the Standing Orders of the House. Now, the Courts of Law had declared that affirmation by Mr. Bradlaugh was illegal, and therefore, I wish to know whether the right hon. gentleman would move a resolution proposing that the motion permitting Mr. Bradlaugh to affirm be expunged from the records of the House. A standing order which invited members to take action which had been declared illegal was a disgrace to the House of Commons. The First Lord of the Treasury, having compelled the House to place the standing order on its books, was the proper person to move that it be removed. (Hear, hear.)

On the 21st February, 1884, Mr. Bradlaugh having agreed not to attempt to take his seat in the House of Commons till Government action at law had been tried,

Lord R. CHURCHILL said: The Prime Minister stated just now that the House was engaged in a serious contest, and with that I fancy every one will concur. Sir, it is not only a serious contest, but in some senses it may be regarded as an alarming one, and I do not think hon. members on this side of the House will be inclined to recede because the contest is either serious or alarming. (Opposition cheers.) Whenever the right hon. gentleman is in power hon. gentlemen on this side of the House always have to face alarming contests. (Opposition cheers and laughter.) We are accustomed to that kind of struggle, but we are told by the right hon. gentleman that we ought to wait before considering this matter further until a decision has been come to by a court of law. I will ask the right hon. gentleman why he did not take up that position the other day when the writ for Northampton was moved? (Opposition cheers.) The Chancellor of the Exchequer made himself an accomplice to precipitation in this matter, because, on his own responsibility, or on that of himself and colleagues, he allowed the Chiltern Hundreds to be conferred on Mr. Bradlaugh when it was in his power to withhold them. (Cries of "No.") It was in his power to withhold, because the Chiltern Hundreds are absolutely in the discretion of the Minister, and have been withheld before now. I ventured to urge upon the House at that time, under the circumstances of the case, and

with the information that we had that the Attorney-General was about to take proceedings in a court of law, that it would be unwise for the House to act precipitately and bring about a fresh contest at Northampton. The Attorney-General and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not wait a moment. The writ must be at once issued. Why? Because they wanted to intimidate the House of Commons. (Opposition cheers and Ministerial laughter.) Certainly there was no question about it. Mr. Bradlaugh was to be allowed once more to appeal to the mob, in order that not only the House of Commons, but the courts of law, might be biassed by the demonstration in his favour. (Opposition cheers and Ministerial cries of "Oh.")

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I rise to order. I think I gathered from the noble lord that he indirectly called my constituents a "mob." (Laughter.) I would ask you whether that is a proper and decorous word to apply to a constituency of this country?

The SPEAKER: I am not prepared to say that the observation of the noble lord is out of order. (Opposition cheers.)

Lord R. CHURCHILL: I may merely say, as an extenuation of the description which I did not apply exclusively to the electors of Northampton—(laughter, and cries of "Birmingham")—that it might be said to combine the whole army of Mr. Bradlaugh's supporters. (Laughter.) In extenuation of that expression to which the hon. member very naturally objects, I may say that I have been informed by a gentleman who has been at Northampton during the election that the election was seriously influenced by the extreme fear which pervaded a considerable portion of the constituency, that if Mr. Bradlaugh was not returned the town would be wrecked by the mob. (Laughter, and cries of "Oh.") I should not have said that, if the hon. member had not interrupted me. Now I wish to ask the Prime Minister a question on procedure. He has stated that the Attorney-General would take proceedings to test the legality of what the Prime Minister has guardedly called the "operation" Mr. Bradlaugh went through the other day. (Opposition cheers and laughter.) I should like to know when this case is likely to come on. I believe the Attorney-General has certain privileges to obtain a decision from a court of law with greater facility than an ordinary suitor. And further, I would ask, and this is the most important point, whether the Crown or its representatives are going to be satisfied with the decision of the court of law, or are going to take this legal and constitutional question, if necessary, right up through all the courts of law to the highest court in the realm—namely, the House of Lords. (Opposition cheers.) A great deal will turn

on that. We have not such exclusive confidence in her Majesty's Government that we can afford to leave the House in doubt. The whole proceedings are, I suppose, to be in the nature of a friendly action, and that is what those who wish to see this matter honestly settled are most anxious to guard against. (Opposition cheers.) When the Prime Minister states that with all possible despatch the Attorney-General will obtain the opinion of a court of law on the matter, it may be settled very rapidly indeed, and the House may be brought face to face with the question before or certainly very soon after Easter. If the Crown is satisfied with the decision of a court of law, look at the position we may be placed in. The judgment may be given in May. The next morning, fortified with the decision, which may have been in his favour—and if it only comes before a court of law I am inclined to think it will be—(Radical cheers)—Mr. Bradlaugh may come down to the House without any notice, and without any preparation for such a contingency on the part of a competent and abundant number of hon. members, and he may go through the form of taking the oath at the table, which the majority are most desirious that he should not be allowed to do. (Hear, hear.) If Mr. Bradlaugh obtained a decision of a court of law in his favour, no doubt his friends will bring that decision at once before the notice of the House, and it will be immediately deliberated upon. They may bring it on as a matter of privilege. So much the better. But the moment that they have got what they want, which is a decision in favour of Mr. Bradlaugh—(Opposition cheers)—they can afford every facility to the hon. member for Northampton to raise the question in the House. (Hear, hear.) This resolution is nothing more than a protecting resolution, and does not in any way prejudge the case which is going to be presented to a court of law. It merely ensures that, whenever the decision shall have been obtained, proper and full notice shall be given to all who may be concerned, that the question is likely to come up for judgment, and that the House shall not be disturbed, as it has already been disturbed, and what can only be stigmatised as a vulgar brawl. (Opposition cheers.) What the resolution further aims at is to give the House some sort of control over the proceedings of the Attorney-General, so that if the majority be of opinion that the case had not been adequately tested, the House might direct that it should be carried to a higher tribunal. Under these circumstances I think the House will be acting with far greater prudence and with more regard to its own dignity, by assenting to the resolution. (Opposition cheers.)

EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES (1883-84).

On December 20th, 1883, Lord Randolph Churchill delivered an address of great importance read in the light of his action in the House of Commons in May, 1884, to the members of the Edinburgh Conservative Working Men's Association. The meeting was held in the Queen-street Hall, about two thousand persons being present. Lord Elcho, M.P., occupied the chair, and among others on the platform were: The Earl of Hopetoun, Sir James Gardiner Baird, Mr. J. A. Campbell, M.P., Mr. C. Dalrymple, M.P., Mr. A. J. Balfour, M.P., &c.

Lord R. CHURCHILL, who was received with loud cheers, said:—A great subject amongst Liberal orators at present is that of Parliamentary reform. It is true that their opinions on this question do not coincide: Lord Hartington is of opinion that the subject of Parliamentary reform has not been adequately considered by the country. Mr. Chamberlain,* on the other hand, declares that it has been considered a great deal too much. Lord Hartington seems to think that Ireland is rather an awkward difficulty, but Mr. Chamberlain thinks there is no difficulty at all, and that the more Parnellites the better. Lord Hartington seems to like the property qualification; Mr. Trevelyan is all for the abolition of the property qualification. It would be as well if these eminent political guides were to make up their minds before bewildering the country with discordant gabble, and until they have done so, the country and the Conservative party will not weary themselves on the subject of Parliamentary reform. Other subjects are of far greater importance; as, for instance, our position in Egypt and our rule in Ireland; and it is on those questions the issues of the next general election will have to be fought. In reference to the subject of Parliamentary reform, it is absolutely essential that the mind of the country be comparatively free from other cares, and that the Parliament which has to deal with it be elected for that purpose. The assimilation of the county and borough franchise was not before the country at the last general election; and the best answer to the statement that the mind of the country was made up, is to be found in Lord Hartington's avowal, that the question was not sufficiently considered by the country in 1832 and 1867. The unenfranchised classes wanted the franchise very much. There were intense political excitement, imposing demonstrations, gigantic petitions, considerable disturbances,

* For whose Life, see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 2.

and dangerous riots. To have refused to enlarge the electorate at such a time might have produced a revolution, but there was no such fear now. There is at present no political excitement, and although the existing electoral arrangements are imperfect and anomalous, they are not so imperfect and anomalous as to excite any very general or deep dissatisfaction, or to prevent the grievances of any class being heard and represented and considered by Parliament. The anomalies and imperfections which do exist are not connected with the limits placed upon the right of voting, but are entirely connected with the distribution of seats, and with the arrangement of the borough boundaries. The more glaring anomalies of our present system are to be found in the restricted borough boundaries, and that is entirely due to the action of the Liberal party. Mr. Disraeli, in 1867, attempted to deal with this question, but was met with opposition by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. Two questions are involved in the demand for Parliamentary reform—first, the demand for equality of franchise between town and county, put forward by Mr. Chamberlain and the Birmingham caucus; and secondly, the demand for equality of franchise on the part of large urban centres of population excluded from the household franchise by restricted boundaries, and on the part of large centres of population insufficiently represented owing to the prevalence of small boroughs with one member and with two members. With respect to the demand for equalisation of franchise in town and country, I can only say that at present there is no anomaly, and if we are to obliterate in our legislation all distinction between town and country; if we assert that the society in towns is not infinitely more educated, intelligent, and progressive than society in the country, and that the average inhabitant of the town and country are absolutely the same, we shall be legislating on a principle which is against common-sense; we shall be destroying the proper balance of political power and creating an anomaly infinitely more dangerous than any which now exists, and we shall be creating it gratuitously. I defy Mr. Chamberlain and his caucus to stimulate the slightest genuine political excitement in the purely agricultural districts, and I refuse to be deceived by such miserable wire-pulling humbug demonstrations as those to which we have been treated recently at Leeds, London, and Bristol. The other portion of that great question of reform, namely, redistribution, is far more important and pressing, and my opinion is that a Parliament should be specially elected to deal with it. My views on Parliamentary reform are that the assimilation of the county and borough franchise is uncalled for, premature, inexpedient, unnatural, and therefore highly dangerous. Redistribution is urgent, loudly

demanded, and must be taken in hand; and Sir Charles Dilke was more than right when he said at Glasgow the other day that redistribution is the key of the whole political future. (Cheers.) With regard to the present political balance of power, is it wise or prudent to give to a country population—admittedly inferior in wealth, intelligence, and independence to the town population—(A Voice: "Not in Scotland")—that predominence which at the present moment boroughs possess? The interests of town and country are always diverse and often clashing. Now as to the question of minority representation I have no hesitation in giving my opinion that a special representation of minorities is all humbug. (Cheers and laughter.) All that minorities have to do if they wish to be represented is to convert themselves into majorities. (Cheers.) I trust that the Conservative party will resolve to support the abolition of that most foolish, silly, foreign device for the representation of minorities. The motives of the Government in bringing forward the question of Parliamentary reform are the lowest that could be conceived. In the first place, they are dissatisfied with the British farmer, and hope to overwhelm him with the agricultural labourer. In the second place, their frantic cry is intended to divert the attention of the country from their miserable legislative failures. The Government do not seek for the welfare of the nation; they care less than anything for the class concerning whom they are so specious and so loud. It is their one hope that on the question of Parliamentary reform they may be able to secure that tiny modicum of unanimity which they consider necessary to enable them to retain those highly remunerative offices which they have so disgraced, and that patronage and power which they have so scandalously misused. I pray that the ill-omened and sinister machination may meet with the reward it deserves, and that Edinburgh, in common with the rest of the constituencies, will contrast the performances of the Government with the promises and the pledges of Midlothian, and that they will refuse to renew to those unmasked imposters that confidence which they so unblushingly demand. (Loud cheers.)

A vote of thanks having been passed to the noble lord, the proceedings terminated.

A great Conservative demonstration was held at Blackpool on the 24th January, 1884, in the Prince of Wales's Theatre. There was a very large attendance. Mr. H. H. Wainwright, president of the local Conservative Association, occupied the chair.

Lord Randolph Churchill, on rising, was received with loud cheers. He said :—Two years have elapsed since I had the honour of addressing a Lancashire audience. At that time I endeavoured to describe to the electors of Manchester the true state of Ireland, and the probable effect upon that country and upon our own of the mixture of treachery and incapacity which poisoned the councils of Mr. Gladstone's Administration. (Cheers.) The truth of the remarks I then made was very soon afterwards signally illustrated by the release from prison of the leaders of the revolutionary party in Ireland, the bargain struck between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell for mutual political support (more popularly known as the Kilmainham Treaty), and the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke by the more active section of Mr. Gladstone's new allies. (Hear, hear.) This crowning atrocity gave a slight shock to the political association between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell. It even produced a temporary estrangement during the passing of the Coercion Bill. But this unpleasantness soon wore off. The parties led by these two great men have too much in common to be alienated from each other for long. General destruction and all-round plunder are alike their pleasure, their duty, and their pride. Mr. Gladstone has a weakness for effecting his objects by Act of Parliament; the Irish a slight preference for the more rapid and startling dynamite. A little difference as to method, you see, but a precisely similar result. These two parties are now at this moment preparing to meet Parliament with a demand for a repeal of the Union. Mr. Parnell, with his customary candour, will use the word "Repeal;" Mr. Gladstone, with his customary ambiguity, will describe the policy as an assimilation of Irish and English political rights (laughter), and as the placing in the hands of the people of the local government of the country. It is a monstrous and dangerous coalition we have to face; it strikes at the vitals of the Empire. (Hear, hear.) The Union of England, Scotland, and Ireland is the nerve-centre of the wide-spread dominions of the Queen. (Cheers.) If you sever it, the Empire is dead; if you injure it, the Empire is paralyzed. (Cheers.) It is to Lancashire that the eyes of the Tory party are hopefully turned. Lancashire, we confidently anticipate, will lead the van of the army of resistance. (Cheers.) We remember that Lancashire, first of all English counties, discerned the germs of this movement in 1868, when Mr. Gladstone, flying like an unkennelled fox from one corner of the country to another, was hurled down by your Southern Division. Down through electoral space he fell, nor stayed his fall till he reached the distant borough of Greenwich. (Laughter.) Down, too, at

that time fell Lord Hartington, his accomplice, whom an obscure village in Wales received and nourished. We remember that but for Lancashire in 1868 the Tory party was almost gone, and by those memories we call upon you now to rouse yourselves to the fight, and to rally the British counties against the Prime Minister and his rebel allies. Soon, very soon, this Parliament—"the best of all modern Parliaments" (laughter)—will be scattered to the winds, its members scurrying helter-skelter about the country; soon the destinies of this Parliament will be in the hands of the leaders of the Opposition, and if, for once, they can nerve themselves to a struggle, and seize upon golden moments, Mr. Gladstone's days as a Minister of the Crown are numbered. (Cheers.) It is not only in Ireland that your Imperial interests are imperilled. In Egypt, a tremendous storm is gathering. (Cheers.) I cannot believe that the anarchy and the misery and the insecurity which now distract that country and threaten the entire civilization of the East with ruin will be tolerated much longer by the Powers of Europe. The original object of our expedition to Egypt was distinctly immoral and base. It has tainted and corrupted all our efforts to restore order, and still remains a withering blight and curse. I said at Edinburgh what I have said all along, that the Khedive Tewfik was a person unfit from his character and by his actions to be supported by Great Britain. This position has never been seriously contested either by the Government or by the leaders of the Opposition, but within the last few days has received a most remarkable confirmation. The name of "Chinese Gordon" is a household word, not only in Egypt, but here at home, for courage, honesty, and truth. (Cheers.) A statement from General Gordon* appeared in all the papers the other day on the crisis in the Soudan. That high-souled officer recommended that Nubar Pasha should be placed at the head of the Egyptian Government. And what was the great danger he saw to Nubar Pasha's influence for good? One danger and one alone—the intrigues of the Khedive Tewfik, the false and treacherous character of the Khedive Tewfik. That was the danger against which he warned his countrymen. General Gordon has just left this country for the Soudan with dictatorial authority conferred upon him by the English Government. What was the one condition which he made, the *sine qua non* on which he insisted, before undertaking his Herculean task? One condition and one only—that he should be entirely independent of the Khedive Tewfik, should receive no orders from him, should be brought into no connection with him, but that all his instructions and all his authority

* For whose Life see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 5.

should emanate from Downing-street, and not from the Palace of Cairo. Could I, I ask you, could I have obtained a more tremendous corroboration of my charges against the Khedive Tewfik* than this irrefutable testimony of General Gordon? (Cheers.) I said at Edinburgh what I have said all along, that the Egyptian war was a bondholders' war, and I say now that our occupation of Egypt is a bondholders' occupation. (Cheers.) Is there any one so simple as to suppose that we should have interfered with the movement of Arabi had there been no such things as Egyptian bonds? There are those who dare to tell you that the protection of the Suez Canal was the object of our expedition to Egypt. A more erroneous statement was never made. (Hear, hear.) The Suez Canal was at no time in the smallest danger. The Suez Canal will always take care of itself. The whole world, the East and the West, are equally and mutually interested in the freedom of the Suez Canal. No, you will not be misled by such an obvious and transparent fiction. It was bonds and bondholders and no other power which diverted Mr. Gladstone, greatly hesitating, from his path; which impelled the British fleet to Alexandria. It was bonds and bondholders only which commanded the British troops. Now, I pray you mark this. England has never before interfered with the internal affairs of other nations on account of bonds or debts which might be owing to her people. We have always looked upon these matters as altogether outside the range of active Government interference. The Southern States of America took a lot of money from us which they never paid. Did we go to war with the United States? The wretched, cheating Republics of Honduras, Costa Rica, and Venezuela, ruined an immense number of British subjects. Did we occupy those countries with our forces? I am afraid to say how many people in this country lost their all when Turkey repudiated her debts. The Government of England took no action. It has been left for Mr. Gladstone's Government to depart from this wise and time-honoured tradition, for this Government of Mr. Gladstone, whose cardinal principle of foreign policy was non-intervention; it has been left for them to intervene, and intervene actively and violently, and on the side of oppression as against the cause of freedom, in the one particular sphere in which till now non-intervention had been acquiesced in by both parties in the State. (Cheers.) But I do not ask you to take my assertion as sufficient proof of this accusation. I refer you to Lord Granville's despatch in 1882. Then, in answer to Sir E. Malet's inquiry as to whether the Egyptian Government might be allowed to superintend the expenditure of all those taxes which had not been

* For whose Life, see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 6.

assigned to the bondholders, Lord Granville refuses his consent, "regard being had," he says, "to those pecuniary interests on whose behalf Her Majesty's Government are acting," and from the moment of that despatch the troubles in Egypt grew. (Hear, hear.) This despatch is the damning proof of my indictment against Mr. Gladstone, that he has used the resources, dishonoured the name, and imperilled the position of this country in the East, on account of and in the interests of a gang of Jewish speculators and stock-jobbers who hold Egyptian bonds. (Hear, hear.) I am not raking up the past for the mere fun of raking up the past, nor for the mere purpose of attacking Her Majesty's Government. I am raking up the past, and will continue to rake it up till voice and breath shall fail me, because I want the people to look into this question of our business in Egypt; because I know that until the people do look into it themselves, and settle and solve it for themselves, no good will be done. (Cheers.) These speculators and stock-jobbers who have dragged this country into war, and have saddled this overburdened Empire of ours with the occupation of Egypt, are comparatively few in number, but are very powerful. They have their creatures in the Government offices, they have their organs and writers in the London Press, they have their emissaries and spies and agents hard at work in London society. The pressure they can bring to bear is tremendous, and I am deeply convinced that until the masses of the people smash up and scatter this accursed ring, our operations in Egypt will continue to be attended with failure, disgrace, and disaster. I know this, if I know anything at all, that if once the people of this country as a whole can be induced to interest themselves in any matter, to take it up, to make it their own, to settle it one way or another, the people will not go wrong. Governments will go wrong, Parliaments will go wrong, classes will go wrong, London society and the Pall-Mall clubs always go wrong (laughter); but the people do not go wrong. (Cheers.) You must take up this Egyptian question and examine it for yourselves. I use the expression "you must" advisedly, because if you would for one moment grasp the tremendous responsibilities towards Egypt, towards Europe, towards civilization, which we have already incurred, the unknown and infinite liabilities we are drifting into, the terrible and crushing dangers which may at any moment burst upon us, you would not lose a day, or even an hour, before speaking out your mind. (Cheers.) I said that the occupation of Egypt was a bondholders' occupation. The policy of Her Majesty's Government in this Soudan question is proof enough of that, if proof were wanted. Had we been in Egypt for the interests of Egypt, or of Europe, or of civilization

and freedom generally, should we have abandoned the entire territory of the Soudan, with all its government, garrisons, European and Egyptian subjects, to be massacred by a cruel and fanatical barbarian? Every honest man will answer no. But it is because we are not in Egypt for the benefit of Egypt, or of Europe, or of civilization and freedom, and because an effort to hold the Soudan would have depreciated Egyptian bonds, would have led very probably to their ultimate repudiation and made the Jewish speculators and stock jobbers howl—it is because of all this that we have abandoned the Soudan, and with it all our honour and all our prestige in the East. (Cheers.) I know well what the people of England would say if they examined for themselves this Egyptian affair. They would say that the original expedition to Egypt was unnecessary and iniquitous; that Mr. Gladstone allowed a revolutionary movement to proceed far enough to destroy and shatter a corrupt and filthy dynasty; but that just when the revolutionary movement, which had at its back the entire Egyptian nation, was about to construct on the ruins of the former Government an administration of its own, that at that critical moment Mr. Gladstone intervened and shattered the revolutionary movement; that from that disastrous day till now he has wandered amid the devastation purposeless and bewildered, has made no effort to reconstruct Egyptian society, no effort to relieve from their burdens Egyptian people; but that haunted and distracted by the guiltiness of his intervention, he has added misery to misery, and woe to woe, till he has transformed the fair land of Egypt into a perfect hell upon earth. (Cheers.) The people of England would say that such a state of things must cease; that a Government must be established which must possess the confidence of the Egyptian people; that a dynasty which is repudiated by a nation of six millions shall not be forced upon that nation by the armies and the navies of the liberty-loving and liberty-spreading Anglo-Saxon race; that the financial resources of Egypt shall be assigned to the full and entire satisfaction of the demands of Egyptian government; and if there is any surplus that, and that only, shall go to the Egyption bonds, thus reversing the process which is going on now under our auspices of assigning all the financial resources of Egypt to Egyptian bonds, and leaving any niggardly surplus which may remain for Egyptian government, for the maintenance of society, law, and order in that country, and for the development of the resources of that impoverished and plundered land. (Cheers.) They would say that, as our Government has rashly but irrevocably committed England to the resettlement of Egypt, those purposes, and those purposes

alone, shall be the object of the employment of British troops; that until those purposes are accomplished, British troops shall remain in Egypt, flinching from no obstacles, no difficulties, no dangers, and that when those purposes have been accomplished, that on that glad day, and not before, the British troops shall evacuate Egypt with genuine glory, added honours, and increased renown. (Cheers.) This is what the people of England would say; this is how the British race would fulfil its great mission upon earth; and it is because I know that it is only the mass of the people as a whole which will give this brave and noble answer that I implore the people to turn their eyes steadily to the East. (Cheers.) Let us now look for a few moments at our own domestic affairs. A stupendous programme of legislation is prepared by the Ministers for a jaded and worn-out Parliament in the coming session. The extension of the franchise, county government for the three kingdoms, local taxation, the municipal administration of the metropolis, University education for Scotland, intermediate education for Wales—these are but the leading items of a long list which the Government, apparently in all seriousness, profess to expect to deal with in a thoroughly comprehensive fashion before New Year's day shall again come round. And if they fail to deal with any of these subjects, as fail they will and must (cheers), the ready excuse will burst from their lips that the cause of their failure is the villainy of the Tory party and the atrocious baseness of the House of Lords; whereas, if for a passing moment, by the exertion of some supernatural power they could be clothed in the garb of truth, they would be the first to acknowledge that their own prodigious imbecility was alone to blame for the catastrophe. (Cheers.) I will not conceal my own opinion, that should one and all of the great questions which I have enumerated remain *in statu quo* for another five or ten years, no one of the Queen's subjects would be a penny the worse. (Hear, hear.) A starving population is not to be fed by votes; a ruined commerce and agriculture are not to be resuscitated by the abolition of quarter sessions; and a tottering empire will not be maintained by the creation of a new Lord Mayor. (Hear, hear.) If my advice were asked, I would recommend the people of England to leave legislation alone for a while, and to insist upon the House of Commons devoting itself to a little practical business. (Hear, hear). At any rate this course would have all the charm of novelty. I will explain what I mean. The first and most vital interest of a nation is finance. Upon finance everything connected with government hinges. Good finance insures good government and national prosperity; bad finance is the cause of inefficient government and national depression. Great

and endless controversies have been carried on for some years between rival Chancellors of the Exchequer, as to whether Liberals are more extravagant than Conservatives, or *vice versa*. Do not trouble yourselves about these quarrels—they are perfectly idle, fruitless, and beside the real question; figures and statistics are jumbled up, added to, subtracted from, multiplied, and divided by the frantic combatants until a perfectly insoluble Chinese puzzle has been created, in which everyone is hopelessly lost. (Laughter.) The truth is, and I speak with the advantages of a looker-on, who, as you know, generally sees most of the game, that both parties are extravagant, and that all Governments are lavish. The only difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives on this most vital question is that Conservative extravagance is honest and above board; Liberal extravagance is dishonest and surreptitious. (Cheers.) Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Gladstone contending about financial extravagance always reminds me of the two men who went up into the Temple to pray—Sir Stafford Northcote occupying the pleasing and hopeful position of the publican, Mr. Gladstone that of the purblind and sanctimonious Pharisee. (Laughter.) The great fact which I am anxious to impress upon you is, that in 25 years your expenditure has increased five and twenty millions. The gross revenue now collected by the Chancellor of the Exchequer amounts to nearly ninety millions. The sum is so enormous that you will be inclined to agree that the most ordinary prudence compels rigid inquiry. It may be all right, perfectly natural, and quite satisfactory; but let us make certain of this. When you are spending such colossal sums as £90,000,000 a year, do not let any doubt remain in your minds for a moment as to how the money goes. You can easily do this if you like. Year by year the control of the House of Commons over the yearly expenditure is getting more slender and more feeble. To such an extent is this deterioration going on that, last session, under the financial guidance of Mr. Gladstone, the sublime spectacle was witnessed of thirty millions of taxation being voted by the House of Commons in thirty minutes of time. (Hear, hear.) For many years there has been no overhauling by Parliament of the spending departments. It is a great mistake to suppose that Ministers preside over their departments. They do nothing of the kind. They merely appear for them in Parliament. The public departments are despotically presided over by permanent officials, perfectly irresponsible, caring nothing for the House of Commons, which has for years left them to themselves, and always putting back in his place, with the greatest success and rapidity, any Minister who should be such an egregious fool as to imagine he was

really a Minister. Under this kind of *regime* you are spending ninety millions of money on your Government, and this kind of *regime* has grown up on account of the House of Commons of late years being entirely given over to legislation. No time is ever left for what I call business, and year after year public accounts—£. s. d.—are left to look after themselves. Now, in all seriousness, this is an ominous change. (Hear, hear.) It was not so, it was not on such principles that our great financial character and credit were built up. We are come now upon bad times; if ever national thrift was necessary it is necessary now. (Hear, hear.) I should like to see the House of Commons devote one or even two entire sessions to finance, and nothing but finance. I should like to turn the House of Commons loose into our public departments on a voyage of discovery. I should like to see every one of our public departments rigorously inquired into by small committees of about seven experienced and practical members of Parliament, each. Depend upon it, we should discover some arrangements of extraordinary interest and curiosity. The inquiry should include the amount of work which any department is expected or supposed to transact, the amount of work which it actually does transact, the number of hands employed in transacting that work, the hours of labour of each clerk or *employe*, the salaries received by each, and then let all these be carefully compared, under the same headings, with the arrangements in some of our great commercial establishments. (Hear, hear.) Such an inquiry could not but be most useful, and such an inquiry is compulsorily and peremptorily dictated to you when you consider the vast scale of your expenditure and the present bad times. My firm belief is, that such an inquiry would demonstrate that those useful arrangements of economy of time, economy of labour, and economy of money are absolutely unknown in our public departments. I believe that such an inquiry would lead to the decrease of our Foreign Office establishments at home and abroad by at least two-thirds. I do not imagine that the public has the smallest idea of the utter uselessness of a great portion of that department. I allude especially to the large staff of secretaries and *attaches* which is kept up abroad for purely ornamental purposes. The Foreign Office would have a very bad time before a Committee of the House of Commons which was firmly intent on effecting a great economy. Take the War Office again. We should find, in all probability, that nearly all the mechanical work of that department could be discharged by intelligent and meritorious non-commissioned officers at about one-half of the salaries now paid to the War Office clerks. We should find that we spend annually from 15 to 16

millions on our army. Germany, Austria, and France do not spend more; but we should find that while these Powers have great armies, we have no army at all. (Laughter.) We have regiments of various sorts; but if by an army you mean a perfect fighting machine fully equipped in all its parts, composed of seasoned soldiers, and ready to take the field at the shortest notice, then we have not got an army or anything approaching it; and yet we spend over 15 millions on it annually. You would have to consider whether it is worth while going on spending such an enormous sum of money for a thing which you do not possess. (Hear, hear.) Look at the navy. We spend 10 or 11 millions annually upon our navy. The highest naval authorities will tell you that our navy against a coalition of France and Russia, or France and Italy, would be absolutely impotent to protect our coasts, our commerce and our colonies. Some day when we have a great war—and with Egypt on our hands such a war may come at any moment—we shall discover all these trifles; but do not you think that there would be no harm in spending a little time now, while you are at peace, in looking into all this, in making certain about it, and of not placing such implicit confidence in the optimist statements of either one minister or another? (Cheers.) Do not you think that the time would be as well spent, and even better spent, by the House of Commons than in wrangling over the order and course of legislation, whether reform or re-distribution should come first, whether they should be dealt with together or singly, whether Ireland should be included or excluded, whether the 40s. freeholder shall be abolished or preserved? (Cheers.) All these questions are infinitely little and unimportant when compared with the real practical business matters which I have suggested (cheers), and if to the line of business which I am most anxious to see adopted you add the prospect and the chance—and the very good chance—of saving about 10 millions of money at present absolutely wasted, I think you will agree that the suggestions I have made are neither foolish, unattractive, nor unworthy of your serious attention. (Cheers.) The Radicals are always denouncing financial extravagance. They profess on this point great independence of party, but just test the sincerity of their denunciations by some such proposals as I have made to you, that all legislation should be put off for a year, and that we should apply the whole of our abilities and time to saving public money. You would have such a howl of fury from them as never was heard. Rather than lose their chance of subverting the monarchy and establishing a republic in this country, they would allow you to spend 200 millions a year. I believe myself

that the English people would rather have an economical and thrifty Government than a Republican Government, and yet of this I am certain, that you will never have an economical and thrifty Government until you positively direct and order the House of Commons to adopt some such course as I have proposed. (Cheers.) There is another inquiry which might be carried on simultaneously with those which I have mentioned, of the most vital importance to the working classes of this country, and that is an inquiry into the present condition of British industry, and as to how that industry is affected by our present methods of raising revenue for the service of the State. (Hear, hear.) I think that such an inquiry is needed even if it was only to compose the public mind. What is the state of things in the world of British industry? We are suffering from a depression of trade extending as far back as 1874, ten years of trade depression, and the most hopeful either among our capitalists or our artisans can discover no signs of a revival. Your iron industry is dead, dead as mutton; your coal industries, which depend greatly on the iron industries, are languishing. Your silk industry is dead, assassinated by the foreigner. Your woollen industry is *in articulo mortis*, gasping, struggling. Your cotton industry is seriously sick. The shipbuilding industry, which held out longest of all, is come to a standstill. Turn your eyes where you will, survey any branch of British industry you like, you will find signs of mortal disease. The self-satisfied Radical philosophers will tell you it is nothing; they point to the great volume of British trade. Yes, the volume of British trade is still large, but it is a volume which is no longer profitable; it is working and struggling. So do the muscles and nerves of the body of a man who has been hanged twitch and work violently for a short time after the operation. But death is there all the same, life has utterly departed, and suddenly comes the *rigor mortis*. Well, but with this state of British industry what do you find going on? You find foreign iron, foreign wool, foreign silk and cotton pouring into the country, flooding you, drowning you, sinking you, swamping you (hear, hear); your labour market is congested, wages have sunk below the level of life, the misery in our large towns is too frightful to contemplate, and emigration or starvation is the remedy which the Radicals offer you with the most undisturbed complacency. But what produced this state of things? Free imports? I am not sure; I should like an inquiry; but I suspect free imports of the murder of our industries much in the same way as if I found a man standing over a corpse and plunging his knife into it I should suspect that man of homicide, and I should

recommend a coroner's inquest and a trial by jury. Of this you may be certain—that an impartial inquiry into this great question will put more money into your pockets and more hope into your hearts than any Reform Bill. Do you know what free trade means in the mouth of the latter-day Radicals? It means that articles of food, necessaries of life coming from abroad, which can be produced at home, shall be taxed heavily, and that articles of manufacture, luxuries coming from abroad, and which can be produced at home, shall be admitted duty free. Do you know that your cocoa is taxed at 13 per cent., your coffee at 18 per cent., your dried fruits, currants, &c., 26 per cent., your tea 47 per cent., the poor man's tobacco 504 per cent., your rum 504 per cent., your brandy 114 per cent.? Observe this curiosity—that rum, which comes from a British colony, is taxed five times as heavily as brandy, which comes from France; and with all this, silk, leather, wool, and iron are all coming into the country duty free, and hopelessly underselling your own products and driving your industrial population to America, to the colonies, to the workhouse, or to the prison. Do you understand the reason of all this? I frankly confess I do not. Do you think the House of Commons would be wasting its time if it looked into all these matters carefully? Suppose a merchant were to find his expenditure greatly increased, his revenue greatly diminished, and his resources greatly failing, and under these circumstances were to occupy the whole of his time with the differential calculus, or with inquiries into interplanetary space. You would think him very foolish, not to say mad, and you would anticipate his speedy ruin. Well, the English people will be exactly like that merchant, if at such a moment as the present, they occupy the whole of their time with great and wild schemes of legislation, and leave the real, hard, practical business of life to take care of itself. Yet that is the course recommended to you by the Radical party. (Cheers.) Now, if there is one thing more than another of which the Radical party is proud it is their land legislation and their policy with respect to land tenure. Yet I think I can show you that this boasted legislation and policy have grievously affected the labour market in the towns. What is the great cry of the moment? Is it not the congested state of our great towns and the overcrowding of our urban population? And what has produced that congestion and overcrowding? Principally the migration into our towns of an immense population which used to subsist on agriculture. (Hear, hear.) That migration has not only overcrowded your towns, but has increased the competition in the labour market up to starvation level, and has lowered the wages of the artisan classes. Well, in my

judgment, the land legislation and avowed land policy of the Radical party are the chief causes of that migration. The Radical party have destroyed nearly all the privileges, all the pleasures, all the amenities which used to attach to the tenure of land, by their recent legislation, and announce that as speedily as possible they intend to destroy those which may remain, and they threaten the very title itself of individual landed possessions. What is the effect of all this? In former times, and not so very long ago, the moment that a man had made a fortune in trade he invested that money in a landed estate; the possession of a landed estate gave him social status, political influence, and sporting rights, and possessed many other amenities and attractions. The investment of capital by a capitalist in landed estates meant the employment of capital in the development of that estate, in drainage, in extensive building operations, in road making, and every other kind of improvement; in a word, it meant active employment for the agricultural labourer. Investment in land was never a highly remunerative investment, but there was a bloom on it which other investments did not possess, and it was regarded as perfectly safe. But now, all that is gone; the investment is no longer safe, and the bloom has been altogether rubbed off the peach. There is no political influence, no sporting rights, and few amenities. Formerly you had a constant and regular migration of capitalists from our large centres of industrial activity into the country, and a healthy circulation of capital among the country population. But now, in consequence of the Radical land policy, that migration has almost entirely ceased. Auctioneers will tell you that it is no use now trying to sell large landed estates. The capitalist is not such a fool as to invest his hard earned fortune in a security which has been deprived of all its great attractions; he invests his money now in colonial securities, or in landed property abroad. Instead of a migration of wealthy and enterprising capitalists from the town into the country, you have a migration of ruined and starving agricultural labourers into your towns, lowering your wages and increasing your rates; and this disastrous process may be directly traced to the doctrines on the tenure of land which have been put in practice, or are about to be put in practice by the Radical party. (Cheers.) Never did the land require capital so much as it does now, never was land so easily and cheaply in the grasp of the capitalist as it is now, if he chose to put out his hand, and yet there is not a capitalist in his senses who would touch it with a barge pole. I commend this subject to your most careful consideration. These Radical nostrums are like certain drugs which seem to be pleasant to

take at the moment, and which seem to produce a good result at the moment, but which in a very short time are found to be destructive of health and fatal to life. I am certain of this, that the more the English people examine into the Radical policy, the more the Radical party develops itself and comes closer to the eye, the more clearly you will perceive what transparent humbug the Radical policy is, and what transcendent impostors the Radical party is composed of. (Cheers.) A study of one single incident in Mr. Chamberlain's interesting career will lead you to this conclusion. Mr. Chamberlain a short time ago attempted to hold Lord Salisbury up to the execration of the people as one who enjoyed great riches for which he had neither toiled nor spun, and he savagely denounced Lord Salisbury and all his class. As a matter of fact, Lord Salisbury from his earliest days has toiled and spun in the service of the State and for the advancement of his countrymen in learning, in wealth, and in prosperity; but no Radical ever yet allowed himself to be embarrassed by a question of fact. Just look, however, at what Mr. Chamberlain himself does. He goes to Newcastle and is entertained at a banquet there, and procures for the president of the feast a live earl, no less a person than the Earl of Durham. Now Lord Durham is a young gentleman who has just come of age, who is in the possession of immense hereditary estates, who is well known on Newmarket Heath, and prominent among the gilded youth who throng the corridors of the Gaiety Theatre (laughter), but who has studied politics about as much as Barnum's new white elephant, and upon whose ingenuous mind even the idea of rendering service to the State has not yet commenced to dawn. (Laughter.) If by any means it could be legitimate, and I hold that it is illegitimate, to stigmatize any individual as enjoying great riches for which he has neither toiled nor spun, such a case would be the case of the Earl of Durham; and yet it is under the patronage of the Earl of Durham, and basking in the smiles of the Earl of Durham, bandying vulgar compliments with the Earl of Durham, that this stern patriot, this rigid moralist, this unbending censor, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, flaunts his Radical and levelling doctrines before the astounded democrats of Newcastle. (Laughter and cheers.) "Vanity of vanities," says the preacher, "all is vanity;" "Humbug of humbugs," says the Radical, "all is humbug." Gentlemen, we live in an age of advertisement, the age of Holloway's pills, of Colman's mustard, and of Horniman's pure tea; and the policy of lavish advertisement has been so successful in commerce that the Liberal party, with its usual enterprise, has adapted it to politics. The Prime Minister is the greatest living master of the art of

personal political advertisement. (Hear, hear.) Holloway, Colman, and Horniman are nothing compared with him. Every act of his, whether it be for the purposes of health, or of recreation, or of religious devotion, is spread before the eyes of every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom on large and glaring placards. For the purposes of an autumn holiday a large transatlantic steamer, is specially engaged, the Poet Laureate adorns the suite, and receives a peerage as his salary, and the incidents of the voyage are luncheon with the Emperor of Russia and tea with the Queen of Denmark. For the purposes of recreation he has selected the felling of trees, and we may usefully remark that his amusements, like his politics, are essentially destructive. (Laughter.) Every afternoon the whole world is invited to assist at the crashing fall of some beech or elm or oak—the forest laments in order that Mr. Gladstone may perspire (laughter)—and full accounts of these proceedings are forwarded by special correspondents to every daily paper every recurring morning. For the purposes of religious devotion the advertisements grow larger. The parish church at Hawarden is insufficient to contain the thronging multitudes of flycatchers who flock to hear Mr. Gladstone read the lessons for the day, and the humble parishioners are banished to hospitable Nonconformist tabernacles in order that mankind may be present at the Prime Minister's rendering of Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or the Book of Job. This, gentlemen, all this, is the great art of advertisement, and there can be no doubt that it pays when undertaken on the grandiose scale adopted by Mr. Gladstone. I am not sure whether in our calmer and more reflective moments we should not prefer a little more real simplicity in our public men, whether their private lives should not be more genuinely private, and whether their special family interests and family events would not be more natural if they were confined to the family circle. (Hear, hear.) People used to say that Lord Beaconsfield was theatrical; but Lord Beaconsfield was a perfect child in this matter; he had not even mastered the rudiments of the art, and he never dreamt of such grand and theatrical representations as those with which Mr. Gladstone and his starring company astonish the British public week by week. However, these remarks of mine are merely preliminary to a couple of concluding political observations to which I was led by two of the Gladstonian advertisements which appeared in the papers the other day. The first described the journey of a deputation of working-men from the pure and immaculate borough of Chester to Hawarden Castle. It has always appeared to me somewhat incongruous and inappropriate that the great chief of the Radical party should reside in a castle,

But to proceed. One would have thought that the deputation would have been received in the house, in the study, in the drawing-room, or even in the dining-room. Not at all. That would have been out of harmony with the advertisement "boom." Another scene had been arranged. The working men were guided through the ornamental grounds into the wide-spreading park, strewn with the wreckage and the ruins of the Prime Minister's sport. All around them lay the rotting trunks of once umbrageous trees; all around them, tossed by the winds, were boughs and bark and withered shoots. They come suddenly on the Prime Minister and Master Herbert (laughter), in scanty attire and profuse perspiration, engaged in the destruction of a gigantic oak, just giving its last dying groan. They are permitted to gaze and to worship and adore, and, having conducted themselves with exemplary propriety, are each of them presented with a few chips as a memorial of that memorable scene. (Laughter.) Is not this, I thought to myself as I read the narrative, a perfect type and emblem of Mr. Gladstone's government of the Empire? The working classes of this county in 1880 sought Mr. Gladstone. He told them that he would give them and all other subjects of the Queen much legislation, great prosperity, and universal peace, and he has given them nothing but chips. Chips to the faithful allies in Afghanistan, chips to the trusting native races of South Africa, chips to the Egyptian fellah, chips to the British farmer, chips to the manufacturer and the artisan, chips to the agricultural labourer, chips to the House of Commons itself. (Cheers.) I ask you who have followed with care the events of this Parliament, to carry your minds back to the beginning of 1880, to the demonstration of Dulcigno, to the slaughter of Maiwand, to the loss of Candahar, to the rebellion in the Transvaal, to the Irish Land League with all its attendant horrors, to the scenes in the House of Commons, to the loss of freedom and dignity sustained by that assembly, to the abortive sessions, to the Egyptian muddle, with its sham military glories, to the resignation of Cabinet Ministers, to the spectacle recently afforded of two Ministerial colleagues openly defying each other, to the illusory programme spread before you for the coming year, to the immense dangers and difficulties which surround you on every side—turn over all these matters in your minds, search your memories, look at them as you will; I ask you again, is there in any quarter of the globe where the influence of Mr. Gladstone's Government has been felt, is there one single item, act, expression, or development on which you can dwell with any pride or even satisfaction? Is there one single solid, real, substantial construction or improvement which can

benefit permanently or even momentarily, either directly or indirectly, your own countrymen at home, your own countrymen abroad, or any worthy portion of the human race. (Loud cheers.) Chips you will find, nothing but chips—hard, dry, unnourishing, indigestible chips. To all those who leaned upon Mr. Gladstone, who trusted in him, and who hoped for something from him, chips, nothing but chips; to those who defied him, trampled upon his power, who insulted and reviled his representatives and his policy, to the barbarous Boer and the rebel Irish, to them, and to them alone, booty and great gain. The other startling advertisement I wish to allude to was as follows:—"Hawarden Castle.—The Prime Minister attended Divine service this morning. He was guarded as usual." "Guarded as usual!" "As usual!" Gracious Heavens! What a commentary on Liberal government in those two words, "as usual!" Do you know that from the days when first what is called a Prime Minister was invented to the present, there has been no Prime Minister about whom such a statement could be made? Many Prime Ministers have come and gone, good, bad, and indifferent; but the best and the worst have never been guarded by aught else save the English people. And, has it come to this? Are the times so terrible, are bad passions so rife and unrestrained, after four years of Liberal rule, that the apostle of freedom, the benefactor of his country, the man for whom no flattery is too fulsome, no homage too servile, cannot attend Divine service in his parish church without being "guarded as usual?" Surely a world of serious reflection is opened up; surely the art of government must have sunk to a very low ebb, when the first servant of the Crown has to be watched night and day by alguazils armed to the teeth. I hope and pray that they will guard him well, for it would be an indelible stain on our name and our fame if a man who has spent fifty years of his life in the service of the State were to be the victim of an infamous assassin. But I ask myself, are we to blame humanity for this state of things? Is our civilization all in vain? Is Christianity but a phantom and a fiction? Is human nature the awful and incurable cause? Surely not. It is more natural to blame the policy of the statesmen who, to possess themselves of power, to overthrow a hated rival, set class against class and race against race; who use their eloquence for no nobler purpose than to lash into frenzy the needy and the discontented; who for party purposes are ready to deride morality and paralyse law; who, to gain a few votes either in Parliament or in a borough, ally themselves equally with the atheist or with the rebel, and who lightly arouse and lightly spring from one delirium of the multi-

tude to another in order to maintain themselves at a giddy and a perilous height. (Cheers.) This is the true explanation, the deep-seated reason of the words "guarded as usual." Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues, to destroy Lord Beaconsfield, did not scruple to appeal to the most desperate instincts of the human race, and now, to control and crush down this legion of foul fiends, the resources of civilization are almost exhausted. (Cheers.) The Tory party calls upon the country with a sonorous and warning cry to turn away from guides so dangerous, to repudiate betimes a policy so vile, and, by giving over the government to other men, and, above all, to other principles, to restore to the Empire that great calm which in 1880 you were falsely promised, which in 1884 you so dearly need. (Cheers.) The Tory party sets out no long programme, it commits itself to no irredeemable pledges; it does not ask you to embark on any wild and unknown enterprises; it promises you one thing, and one thing only—one thing which is worth everything else, which will bring with it inevitably prosperity and peace—it promises you government, government which for four years you have not had, government for which you vainly pay heavy taxes, government which alone you lack, government which the Tories alone can give—for they are united, homogeneous, patriotic, and true. (Cheers.) Can you look for government, can you expect anything but anarchy from an Administration which contains Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain, from a party which comprises Mr. Samuel Morley and Mr. Bradlaugh, from a heterogeneous agglomeration of Whigs and Radicals, in which "pull devil, pull baker," is the order of the day? (Cheers.) Surely these last four years—four years of base compromise and sickening indecision—must have proved to the most infatuated that the Liberal party of the present day has not one single common principle of policy, either in home or foreign affairs, on which for purposes of efficient government it can unite even for a day. For the Whigs are a class with all the selfish prejudices and all the vices of a class; the Radicals are a sect with all the grinding tyranny and all the debasing fanaticism of a sect. The Whig class and the Radical sect have succeeded, by an amount of political cunning rarely equalled in the history of States, in acquiring a power which their monstrous union is impotent to wield; but their unnatural connection cannot last. It has arisen from the marvellous talents, stupefying eloquence, and illimitable ambition of one man, and with him it will pass away. The well-known proverb, "Vox populi, vox Dei," is to the Whigs as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, for they have always existed by corrupting and deceiving the people. To the Radicals it is a fetish of the

lowest order, for they exist by driving and tyrannizing over the people. But to the Tories "Vox populi, vox Dei" is an ever-springing faith, a vivifying principle, an undying truth, without which their politics would be as naught, without a future and without a hope. The Whigs tell you that the institutions of this kingdom, as illustrated by the balance of Queen, Lords, and Commons, and the Established Church, are but conveniences and useful commodities, which may be safely altered, modified, or even abolished, so long as the alteration, modification, or abolition is left to the Whigs to carry out. The Radicals tell you that these institutions are hideous, poisonous, and degrading, and that the divine caucus is the only machine which can turn out, as if it was a patent medicine, the happiness of humanity. But the Tories, who are of the people, know and exclaim that these institutions, which are not so much the work of the genius of man but rather the inspired offspring of time, are the tried guarantees of individual liberty, popular freedom, and Christian morality, that they are the only institutions which possess the virtue of stability, of stability even through all ages, that the harmonious fusion of classes and interests which they represent corresponds with and satisfies the highest aspirations either of peoples or of men, that by them alone has our Empire been founded and extended in the past, and that by them alone can it prosper or be maintained in the future. (Cheers.) Such is the Tory party, and such are its principles, by which it can give to England the government she requires—democratic, aristocratic, parliamentary, monarchical, uniting in an indissoluble embrace religious liberty and moral order. (Cheers.) And this party—this Tory party of to-day—exists by the favour of no caucus, nor for the selfish interests of any class. Its motto is—of the people, for the people, by the people; unity and freedom are the beacons which shed their light around its future path, and amid all political conflict this shall be its only aim—to increase and to secure within imperishable walls the historic happiness of English homes. (Prolonged cheering.)

SPEECH AT WOODSTOCK.

On Tuesday, 29th January, 1884, Lord R. CHURCHILL, M.P., at the annual dinner of the Woodstock Conservative Association, in responding to the toast of "The Conservative Cause," proposed by Captain Stapleton, said: "I can assure you I thank you very sincerely for the extremely hearty and cordial manner in which you have responded to the toast of

success to the Conservative cause, and I am greatly honoured that you should have thought proper to couple my name with so great a cause. (Cheers.) I have, as you are no doubt aware, addressed recently in various parts of the country large audiences of the British public on what appeared to me the most interesting questions of the day; and, so far as I have been able, I have exhausted those questions. The misfortune of my position to-night is this, that now, when just before the assembling of Parliament I have the honour of meeting my constituents, I find myself, like Sir Stafford Northcote at Exeter, with "nothing" to talk about; only, unlike him, I have nothing to say. (Laughter.) There is, however, gentlemen, one subject on which I must talk to you, only it is a matter of local and personal rather than of public and general interest. I allude to the Parliamentary representation of the borough of Woodstock and to my own connection with that representation. I have been, gentlemen, for ten years member of Parliament for the borough of Woodstock—(cheers)—and during that time I have received from you a more abundant share of confidence and kindness than falls generally to most members of Parliament. I had hoped that I might have continued to represent you so long as Parliamentary existence might be mine, for I was aware that, however fiercely the storms of political life might rage, I had always here a friendly haven to which I could run, and where I could repair damages from the stores of your approval, your encouragement, your confidence, and your support. (Cheers.) The other day, however, gentlemen, I received an intimation from a gentleman who possesses the confidence of the Conservative party in Birmingham that it was the wish of that party there I should contest that town at the next general election, in conjunction with Colonel Burnaby. (Cheers.) I gave to that intimation, as I was bound to do, my most serious consideration, and I decided that if it should turn out in reality to be the wish of the entire party in that great town that I should be one of those who should be invited to fight their battle, it was my duty to place my services at their disposal. (Cheers.) I am sensible of the great advantages which belong to the representation of a moderately-sized constituency; I am equally sensible of the high honour and heavy responsibility which attach to the position of one who might be fortunate enough to gain the confidence of the electors of a vast and wealthy city; but what weighed with me most in coming to a decision was this, that I felt that I should fall greatly in your estimation, which above all else I value, if I were to run away from the chance and the risks of a Birmingham contest, and prefer to shelter myself behind the

fortifications of your indulgence and fidelity. (Cheers.) I am sure you would be of opinion that in the coming struggle on which the entire English Constitution is about to enter, that where the battle is the hottest, where the contest might be the greatest, and the hope the slightest, there was the place where any loyal one in the Conservative cause should like to be. Therefore, gentlemen, if I should receive from our party in Birmingham a formal summons, to Birmingham I shall go. (Loud cheers.) And I am sure that in the contest which will arise I shall carry with me your good wishes and warm sympathies—(cheers)—and whether the result be success or defeat, I shall still enjoy a large measure of your friendship. I know further, gentlemen, that my successor in the representation of this borough, be he who he may, while he will undoubtedly serve you more efficiently than I have been able to do—(no, no)—he will, I hope, like his predecessors for many years back in that position, be loyal to his Sovereign and his country, be devoted to the Empire and to the Constitution, and that this ancient borough, connected from earliest days with the monarchy of England, will never be dishonoured by the representative of the Radical school. (Cheers.) I may tell you, gentlemen, that the days of Woodstock as a Parliamentary borough are said to be drawing to a close, and that Woodstock will be before long numbered amongst those numerous institutions which the axe of Mr. Gladstone will lay low. (Laughter.) All I have to say to you, gentlemen—do not be alarmed: threatened boroughs, like threatened men, live long. Parliamentary reform is no child's play, and has before now wrecked Governments as powerful and more powerful than the present. (Cheers.) Moreover, there is behind Mr. Gladstone another tribunal, compared with whose power Mr. Gladstone himself is but as a pigmy—the tribunal of the English people. (Cheers.) On the sense, on the courage, on the justice, and on the patriotism of that tribunal we may confidently rely. For a just settlement of Parliamentary reform—whether there is to be any settlement at all just now or not, or what form that settlement should take—I do not look to the House of Lords, nor to the Whigs, nor less than all to the Radical party for the settlement of this question. I reiterate that I look to the English people, for I am sure the people will not be at the beck and nod of Mr. Gladstone and the Caucus for the purpose of rejuvenating a senile Administration, or to restore the credit of a dissipated and dying Government. I say they will not break violently with the traditions of the past; they will not destroy those liberties of franchise which their forefathers have erected, nor will they endanger the union of the three kingdoms, on which

hang the future fortunes of the Empire. (Cheers.) All such efforts will not allure them—more needed reforms will encourage them, other guides will guide them, and Woodstock, however much its Parliamentary existence is seriously threatened, along with other institutions, will continue, I am certain, to retain for a long time to come its privileges and its rights, while faithfully performing their duties under the British Constitution." (Loud cheers.)

SPEECH TO THE KIDLINGTON BRANCH OF THE WOODSTOCK CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION.

On the 31st January, 1884, Lord Randolph Churchill attended the annual dinner of the Kidlington Branch of the Woodstock Conservative Association, and met with a very hearty reception. In reply to the toast of the borough member,

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said: While we were spending a very quiet and thoughtful evening the other night at Woodstock the Radicals were making a very noisy display at Birmingham. (A laugh.) But the mode of warfare of the Radical party resembles that adopted by savage tribes, who endeavour to terrify their opponents by horrid yells and resounding exclamations. I observe that the reports of the speeches of Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain on Tuesday were interspersed with "loud and prolonged groans," "groans," "hisses," "renewed hisses," and "roars of laughter," and such like. (Laughter and cheers.) These resources will no doubt frighten any person of weak nerves, and are calculated to make old women and children run away. (Hear, hear, and a laugh.) But the Tory party in Birmingham, many thousands strong, will preserve its composure, and the candidate whom they have put forward will not be intimidated one little bit. (Cheers.) I have said over and over again that the policy and the principles of the Radical party are all humbug. (Cheers.) Mr. Bright declared that such language was shocking and disgusting. Well, I will shock him still more—(loud cheers)—by doing what I have done before, and proving what I have said. (Renewed cheers.) I have never noticed Mr. Bright in any other speeches which I have made. I have always considered him to be out of the hunt. (Loud laughter.) But as Mr. Bright had thought proper to return to the field with all his old ferocity, I will notice Mr. Bright in the course of a few remarks I have to make. (Cheers.) Now, Mr. Bright advised his audience at Birmingham to read over again the speeches of Mr. Charles

Villiers on free trade made fifty years ago. I advise them to do nothing of the kind, because if they do they will lose every shred of veneration and respect which they still may feel for the name of Mr. Bright. They will find that the great battle of free trade, of which Mr. Bright has never been tired of boasting long and loud, was fought by Mr. Charles Villiers long before Mr. Bright made his appearance in public; that Mr. Charles Villiers bore the burden and heat of that protracted and lengthened contest; and when Mr. Villiers had won the day Mr. Bright and his dear friend Mr. Cobden stepped in and tried to rob him of all his glory. (Cheers.) All those who read Mr. Charles Villiers' speeches will find that Mr. Bright and his dear friend Mr. Cobden were nothing more nor less than two plundering cuckoos, who shamefully ejected Mr. Charles Villiers from the nest which he had constructed, and who reared therein their own chattering and silly brood. (Roars of laughter.) I advise those who so lustily cheered Mr. Bright on Tuesday, and so terrifically groaned at his opponents, by no manner of means to read over the speeches of Mr. Charles Villiers, if they wish to see the repeal of the corn laws maintained; for they would find that every prophecy which was ventured upon, every blessing which was promised, every hope which was raised by that distinguished man in support of his case, and which was repeated secondhand by Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden, had been falsified, denied, and disappointed. Mr. Bright no doubt endeavoured to make capital against the Tory party by professing to repeat a private conversation which took place between himself and Lord George Bentinck about half a century ago. Whenever I hear a gentleman endeavouring to make a good story out of a conversation of so very ancient a date—(laughter)—particularly when one of the parties is dead, I always conclude that the gentleman is either blessed with an all-powerful imagination, or that his nightly slumber is agitated with marvellous dreams. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) The Tory party may pass by with the utmost unconcern these legendary reminiscences, nor will the historian of England in search of materials have recourse either to the imagination or the dreams of Mr. Bright. (Cheers.) I will, however, now show you that the policy and principles of the Radical party are what I called them—"humbug." (Laughter.) I regret very much to use such a word, but, after all, it is a good old English word—(a laugh)—and it is the only word which adequately expresses the Radical party. Mr. Bright charges it against the Tories as a high crime and misdemeanour that they are endeavouring to overthrow the best Government which this century has seen. I want to know why it is a crime in the Tory party to attempt

to-day that which Mr. Bright nearly succeeded in doing himself. (Hear, hear.) If the present Government is the best Government which the century has ever seen, why did Mr. Bright think fit to leave it? (Cheers.) Was the best Government of the century not good enough for Mr. Bright? Surely his organs would not go so far as that; but why did he resign office and put the best Government of the century in the greatest amount of peril? (Hear, hear.) Was it in consequence of his great dislike to war and bloodshed? Not a bit of it. (Cheers.) He enjoyed for two years the emoluments of a sinecure office. During those two years two bloody wars were waged—the war in Afghanistan and the war in the Transvaal. Very bloody and disgraceful wars they were. But Mr. Bright continued to draw his salary, and he lolled at his ease in his sinecure office. (Laughter.) He swallowed these bloody wars with the calculating meekness of the sect to which he belonged. Well, I would ask, Why did he resign? He resigned office because of the bombardment of Alexandria? He said it was an outrage against the moral law, and I suppose by the moral law he means the law of God. All he charged against the Government was that they had violated the laws of God—this best of all Governments. The Tories had never presumed to make such a charge as that. Even I myself, whom my enemies have declared to be somewhat free in accusation, even I never ventured to make such a charge as that. (Cheers.) They did not venture to consider themselves the depositaries of Divine justice; but suppose for an instant the Tory party had done what I think they ought to have done—censured the bombardment of Alexandria in the House of Commons—Mr. Bright must have supported that censure, the Radicals must have supported Mr. Bright, the Irish party would have supported that censure, and the best of all Governments in this century would have been ignominiously kicked out of office. (Cheers.) Mr. Bright would have been the author of the catastrophe. This identical Quaker who retains, without doubt, a well-grounded impression that the Radicals of Birmingham have neither memories nor minds, declares that the Government which he has deserted and imperilled is the best Government which this century has seen. Is not that a pretty sample of political humbug, and are the Tory party to sit silently and patiently, and hear themselves literally compared with criminals with previous convictions, by a man who from the day of Mr. Charles Villiers to the present day has pursued an unbroken career of obtaining political support under false pretences? (Cheers.) I say emphatically, "No." No age and no past should shelter a politician such as that from

a minute and microscopic scrutiny of his public actions. (Loud cheers.) The battle which Mr. Bright has rashly challenged shall be fought *sans trève ni merci*. The savage animosity which Mr. Bright has breathed into his speeches has raised a corresponding spirit amongst his opponents. The robe of righteousness with which he and his confederates have clothed their squalid and corrupted forms shall be torn asunder; naked and ashamed shall they be beheld by all the intelligent public, and all shall be disclosed which can be, whether it be the impostor, or the so-called people's tribune, or the grinding monopolies of Mr. Chamberlain, or the dark and evil deeds of Mr. Schnadhorst. (Cheers.) With reference to the latter individual, I am reminded of the *Daily News*, which paper always makes me laugh more than any newspaper which I know of, with the exception of *Punch*—it is so killingly indiscreet. (Laughter.) I came across a passage yesterday in the *Daily News* which sent me into uncontrollable convulsions of laughter. In a tremendous puff of the Birmingham Liberal Association, which the Conservatives called the Birmingham Caucus, and of the foreign-named person, Schnadhorst, the *Daily News* thus wrote: "No record of the work of the Birmingham Liberal Association is kept; no early record of its proceedings can be found." (A laugh.) Dear me! What a misfortune! Poor *Daily News!* (Laughter.) Not even its special correspondent will ever get a peep at its archives. (More laughter.) It is devoutly to be wished, for the credit of English political life, that an impenetrable mystery would always surround the exploits of Messrs. Schnadhorst and Co., at the head of their caucus at Oxford, Wallingford, and Evesham. The only persons who have an active interest in hunting up these records—if they have existence—should be the Law Officers of the Crown and the sergeants of police; for the Birmingham Caucus in 1880, whatever it might be now, was nothing more nor less than an immense machine for political corruption. (Hear, hear.) I heard that in Oxford the Liberal party are forming a caucus; let them imitate the system of the experienced Mr. Schnadhorst, and keep no record of their proceedings. I have altogether dwelt on the Radicals of Birmingham because of the great sparring of the Birmingham pets, which came off last Tuesday —(a laugh)—and because I feel sure from this day, you will take a lively interest in Birmingham politics. (Cheers.) I promise to let you know everything which comes under my observation. I would remind you that the session which is about to open ought to end in a general election, and I pray you to be united, for when the Tory signal is given believe he battle will be ours.

SPEECH AT PRINCE'S HALL, PICCADILLY.

On Saturday, February 16th, 1884, the popular mind being much exercised anent Ministerial mismanagement in Egypt and in the Soudan, a public meeting was held at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, to protest against the policy of her Majesty's Government in Egypt. The hall was crowded, and so many persons were unable to obtain admission that an overflow gathering was organised in St. James's Square. The proceedings at the principal meeting were somewhat noisy throughout, owing to the turbulent behaviour of small knots of malcontents near the platform and at the bottom of the hall. Sir Algernon Borthwick presided, and among the gentlemen present were Lord Randolph Churchill, M.P., the Earl of Hopetoun, Sir Robert Peel, Sir H. D. Wolff, M.P., Lord C. J. Hamilton, M.P., Sir Henry Hoare, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, M.P., Mr. Ross, M.P., Mr. Hicks, M.P., Mr. Tomlinson, M.P., and Sir J. Heron Maxwell.

The chairman in opening the proceedings remarked that they had met on a great occasion to hear some plain speaking. From the Government they had had no plain dealing, and from Parliament but little plain speaking, so that the people must now address the Administration in clear terms, and the Opposition in the same way, telegraphing to their representatives to vote according to their consciences. (Cheers.) They had met to protest against the position into which the country had been put, against truckling to traitors in Ireland, against the proceedings in Egypt, where a message of peace had been followed by bombardment and the occupation of the country. Her Majesty's Government had, indeed, ignominiously failed in carrying out the behests of the nation. (Cheers.)

Lord R. CHURCHILL, who was greeted with cheers, repeated again and again, said: We are gathered together this afternoon for a serious purpose; no other, indeed, than to pronounce, after due deliberation, the strongest and most resolute condemnation of Mr. Gladstone's Egyptian policy, and our detestation and abhorrence of the bloodshed and misery of which he has been the immediate and direct cause. (Cheers.) I say Mr. Gladstone's Egyptian policy because I utterly decline to recognise as responsible agents either his Ministerial colleagues or his Parliamentary supporters. (Cheers.) Those parties have so wallowed in a stifling morass of the most degraded and servile worship of the Prime Minister that they have sunk below the level of slaves; they have become mere puppets, the objects of derision and contempt; they have lost all claim to the title of

Englishmen, and I think they have lost all claim to the title of rational human beings. (Laughter and cheers.) To give you an instance of the abject imbecility which has struck down the Liberal party I would mention what occurred in the House of Commons on Thursday night. Mr. Forster—(cheers)—in that great speech which he made that evening—a speech in which he promised one vote to the Government in the House of Commons, and alienated a hundred thousand votes from the Government in the Country—(cheers)—Mr. Forster, I say, expressed the opinion that the Government ought to have rescued the garrison of Sinkat? "How?" cried out some unfortunate Liberals. "How?" was the plaintiff cry they raised. "How?" shouted Mr. Forster, turning upon them, so that they wished themselves a hundred leagues under the sea, "How? Why, by doing a fortnight earlier what they are doing now, sending British soldiers to the rescue." (Loud cheers.) This is a good instance of the hopeless and incurable mental alienation to which the once free and independent Liberal party have been reduced by Mr. Gladstone. It was, indeed, a melancholy spectacle. I said that our purpose this afternoon was a serious one, and it is so. It is a serious thing for Englishmen to meet together in open day for the purpose of doing all they can to destroy a Government. But we are not alone. Thousands of your countrymen have already met, and thousands more will meet, animated by the same feelings as yourselves, and, like yourselves, resolved to exhaust their energies in a supreme effort to avert further disgrace from our name, future defeat from our army, and ultimate ruin from our country, by dashing from his pride of place the evil and moonstruck Minister who has brought England into grievous peril. (Cheers.) Perilous, I say, is our condition, for it is perilous for a country to shed human blood in vain; it is perilous for a country to assume responsibilities which it is too cowardly to discharge; it is perilous for a country to permit its foreign interests to be in such a condition that any morning we may awake to hear Europe demanding reparation, and even vengeance. (Cheers.) Once again, for the fourth time in four years, do the Ministry whose programme was peace, and whose component parts were Quakers—(great laughter)—call upon you to give them authority to wage a bloody war. Of their former wars the results have been either infamous or futile—infamy in the South of Africa, futility in the North of Africa. Will you, I ask, with these memories still fresh in your minds, permit these false guides again to direct your course? (Cries of "No, no.") There can be but one answer. (Cheers.) If war is again to be waged; if British blood and British treasure are again to be poured forth; if the

regeneration of Egypt and the East is once more to be taken in hand, then other heads must do the work, and other policies must be pursued. (Loud cheers.) A Parliament which has long ceased to represent England must be dissolved, and a Ministry, for a parallel to which you must go back to the days of Shaftesbury or Lord North, must be placed on its trial by the people. (Renewed cheers.) We have to provide for the safety of the hero Gordon—(cheers)—for the safety of the 4,000 British soldiers sent to Suakin, for the safety of the garrisons of the Soudan, 30,000 souls in all, whose one and only hope is now reposed in you. Above all, we have to provide for the safety of our position in the Delta of the Nile. Shall labours such as these, interests so tremendous and so vital, be committed to the hands of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues—(cries of "No")—men who have on their souls the blood of the massacre of Maiwand, the blood of the massacre of Lang's Nek, the blood of Sir George Colley, the blood of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, and many other true and loyal subjects of the Crown in Ireland, the blood of Hicks Pasha and his 10,000 soldiers, the blood of the army of General Baker, the blood of Tewfik Bey and his 500 heroes? (Loud cheers.) For four years this Ministry has literally waded in blood; their hands are literally dripping and reeking with blood. From massacre to massacre they march, and their course is ineffaceably stamped upon the history of the world by an overflowing stream of blood. How many more of England's heroes —how many more of England's best and bravest, are to be sacrificed to the Moloch of Midlothian. (Cheers.) This, too, is shocking and horrible—the heartless indifference and callousness of the Liberal party to narratives of slaughter and unutterable woe. Fifteen times did Mr. Gladstone on Tuesday night in his reply to the grave and measured accusations of Sir Stafford Northcote—fifteen times, I say, did he excite the laughter of his Liberal supporters with a frivolity which was too hideous to contemplate. (Cries of "Shame.") Talk of Bulgarian atrocities! Add them altogether, and even multiply them if you will, and you will not exceed the total of the atrocities and the infamies which have distinguished with an awful reputation the most blood-stained and withal the most cowardly Government which England has ever seen. Well, we are met together this afternoon as loyal subjects of the Queen, and as lovers of our country for this purpose, and this purpose only—to put a stop to further wicked and wanton bloodshed. (Hear, hear.) We know that great empires must sometimes fight great battles, and that empires which fear to fight battles will soon cease to be empires; but we are resolved

that the battles which we have to fight shall be fought for definite objects and for noble ends, and that poltroons and traitors in the garb of Ministers of the Crown shall sacrifice no longer for worthless and degraded aims the lifeblood of our country. (Cheers.) The supporters of the present Government exclaim that the Tory party, although prodigal of censure, is deficient in a policy of its own ; and with many taunts they call upon us to disclose the direction in which our efforts would be turned in the event of a change in the councils of the Crown. The demand cannot be considered unfair, and the reply is not so difficult as some people seem to think. We recognise to the very uttermost the immense responsibilities which this country has incurred towards Egypt and towards the interests of Europe there, and to the discharge of those responsibilities we would be prepared to apply all the resources, if needs be, of the empire of the Queen ; and till those responsibilities are satisfied we would neither stop nor stay. (Cheers.) The history of the Tory party in the past is, I fearlessly assert, an ample guarantee—(cries of "Oh!")—that the recognition of a responsibility and the full discharge of a responsibility are inseparable and consequential. (Renewed cries and cheers.) I cannot claim to have the smallest share in the councils of the leaders of the Tory party, whoever they may be—(laughter)—and therefore, as far as they are concerned, I speak without authority. (Cries of "No, you are our leader.") But having studied with some care the history of our party in the past, possessing an unbounded faith in its future, and being not altogether ignorant of the state of public opinion, I will venture to say this much—that the policy of the Tory party, should it be placed in power, will be a policy of calling things by their right names. (Hear, hear.) The occupation of Egypt by the British forces will be called a protectorate of Egypt by the British Empire, having for its object the establishment, in process of time, of a government at Cairo, which shall be consonant with the legitimate and laudable aspirations of the Egyptian people, which shall be able to protect itself alike from internal tumult and from foreign intrigue, which, while it shall develop the undoubted resources of Egypt, shall faithfully discharge the equitable liabilities of its people, and which, as far as human governments can do, shall give promise of prosperity and happiness in the land of the Nile. (Cheers.) We are now in Egypt by the sufferance of Europe, but we must endeavour to be in Egypt by the mandate of Europe. Our protectorate, to be effective and authoritative and secure, should be acquiesced in by a European congress, in which Turkey shall be adequately represented and the rights and powers of the

Sultan loyally secured. Our protectorate, if it is to be crowned with success, must not shrink from dealing comprehensively and boldly with the financial indebtedness of Egypt, even though such dealing should involve some pecuniary liability on ourselves. The work, if you undertake it, will be a work of time—perhaps a long time. It will be a work of difficulty, and perhaps a work of danger; but it would be also a work of duty and a work of honour, and from work of that kind Britain has never yet recoiled. (Cheers.) It is a work which, if courageously persisted in, will bind more closely to us than heretofore the sympathies of the Mohammedan races, and will establish on deeper foundations our dominions in the East. Our aims are honour, peace, and freedom—(cheers)—and we should not shrink from prosecuting those aims, if need be, by force of arms. Conscious of their magnanimity, we would go boldly forward, knowing well that the results of our policy would surely be to undo the heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free. (Loud cheers.) His lordship concluded by moving: "That in the opinion of this meeting her Majesty's Government are entirely responsible for the anarchy which prevails in Egypt and the bloodshed which has occurred and which is imminent in the Soudan, and that the vacillating and pusillanimous policy of the Ministers deserves the severest censure of the country."

BIRMINGHAM SPEECHES.—APRIL, 1884.

Lord R. CHURCHILL and Colonel BURNABY, the Conservative candidates for Birmingham, arrived in that town on April 15th, 1884, and obtained a most enthusiastic reception. They were met by a number of the leading local Conservatives, who escorted them in carriages, preceded by a military band, to the Grand Hotel. In each case the crowd, which was a large and enthusiastic one, unhorsed the carriage containing the candidate, and drew it to its destination. Lord Randolph Churchill, who was accompanied by Lady Randolph Churchill, on arriving at the hotel, appeared at the window with Colonel Burnaby, and thanked the crowd for their reception, which he said was a bright presage of the result of the contest which they were about to begin. The proceedings of the day comprised a public reception of the candidates, a dinner at the local Conservative Club, and a large meeting in the Town Hall. At the latter there were some dissentients present, but the proceedings were orderly, and a resolution approving of the candidature of

Colonel Burnaby and Lord Randolph Churchill was carried with enthusiasm.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, who, on rising to address the meeting, was received with loud and prolonged cheering, and waving of hats and handkerchiefs, said :—"I find myself on a platform consecrated to the memories of Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden, on a platform from which has been poured forth with licentious exuberance all the fictitious facts and fabricated doctrine of the straitest sect of the Radical Pharisee ; and instead of repeating, as I ought to do, after the manner of a parrot, such scraps of wisdom as I may have picked up and assimilated from the lips of those high priests of the Radical creed, I propose to ask your kind indulgence while I suggest certain reasons against your reposing, or renewing confidence, in the doctrines of the preachers whom I have reverently alluded to. Birmingham, ever since the Reform Bill of 1832, with the exception of three years, during which Mr. Spooner was its representative, has adhered with consistency and unwavering fidelity—a fidelity which I am not prepared to censure—to the fortunes of the Radical party. So steadfast has been that allegiance that your great city has come to be considered the pocket borough of the Radical party, and to a continuance of that allegiance the Radicals maintain and assert what amounts to a sort of Divine right. It is that title which I am here to-night to contest and to deny. I am not here to deny the services which the Radical party has rendered to English civilisation. But parties, like empires and all human combinations, wax and wane. The law of perpetual change, the motive principle of the Radical, exercises its fatal effect upon the Radical himself. The place of Mr. Warburton is now filled by Mr. Jesse Collings, and the philosophy of Mr. John Stuart Mill finds its chief apostle in Mr. Bradlaugh. I am not afraid to give to the Radical party all the credit which they claim for past achievements. I will concede to the Radical party, if they like, that the whole of our commercial prosperity, which leaped and bounded to such an astonishing height in 1874, was due entirely to Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright. But I will assert with the utmost confidence that a practical, sensible, and unemotional consideration of the requirements of the people and the interests of the Empire, combined with a critical analysis of the present position and the present conduct and component parts of the Radical party, will prove beyond all contradiction that that party is utterly played out. First I will prove that the party exists partly by false pretences and partly by a despotic and disciplinary organization opposed to freedom generally, and to the English nature in particular ;

that in its blind and unreasoning fury against political opponents, it has fatally and for ever lost whatever of truth and what little of patriotism it ever possessed. In a word, I will assert and prove that the Radical party is all humbug. The great motto which enabled the Radical party of old days to guide and control the course of events, to make and unmake Ministers and Governments, to win and retain the confidence of mighty cities, was "Peace, retrenchment, and reform;" in other words, non-intervention, rigid economy, and genuine progressive legislation. It is these great principles which gave them power even when few in number, and which they asserted with obstinacy and irrespectively of party on all occasions, small or great. Now, they have half a dozen representatives in the Government; they have a hundred or more representatives in the House of Commons; they have an effective organization in the country—and with this astonishing result, that "peace, retrenchment, and reform," which used to be the objects of their adoration, which gained for them the confidence of the people, have been trampled upon, repudiated, and reviled. For four years the Radical party have had unrivalled opportunities for carrying their great principles into practical effect. It was open to them to have forced the Government to retire from Afghanistan. Not one word of complaint or censure did they utter. Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain derived the utmost credit and satisfaction from whatever glory attached to these military operations. In the session of 1881 came the revolt of the Boers, with which every Radical in England was found to sympathise. What was the conduct of the Radical party? They permitted the Government to attempt to suppress the revolt by force of arms, to sustain three desperate defeats, to send out an immense armament to South Africa, and they refused to join in any censure of the Government for those abortive and disgraceful military operations. With the session of 1882 came the struggle for Egyptian freedom undertaken by Arabi Pasha. What was the conduct of the Radical party? Again they permitted the Government to plunge into war to attempt to suppress another struggle for liberty, to destroy great towns, to fight a bloody battle, and not a word of censure would they utter against those proceedings. Now, in this session the Radical party have not only not censured, but they have connived at and consented to the most sanguinary and the most fruitless military operations which English history can record. The responsibility for all this violation of peace rests on the Radical party. At any moment they could have arrested each and all of these wars. At any moment they could have withdrawn their representatives from the Government and

turned the Government out of office. If they had been mindful of their principles, by which they gained great confidence, or their traditions, they would have done so, no matter what the result might be. But no; they persistently refused to censure these proceedings, and they reviled and denounced all those who did try to censure those proceedings, and they permitted their hatred of the Tory party to utterly eradicate from their memories and their minds the first and the greatest of their great principles—peace. For my own part I hate war. But there is one thing which I hate more than war—useless and unprofitable war. Tried by this test, the Radical party comes out very badly; their war in Afghanistan resulted in the taking of Merv by Russia; their war in the Transvaal resulted in the perpetration of every kind of atrocity by Zulus, by Bechuanas, and by Boers; and their war in Egypt is still going on. Heaven only knows when it is going to end. But one way and another the Radicals have permitted the expenditure of ten millions of money and of thousands of human lives; and I ask, with the greatest confidence, can they produce anything whatever in the shape of a result which can be satisfactory to a practical-minded people? With regard to retrenchment, I find that in 1875, the second year of office of a Tory Government, the expenditure was 75 millions, and that in 1882, the second year of office of a Radical Government, it was 85 millions. In 1876, the third year of office of a Tory Government, the expenditure was 80 millions; in 1883, the third year of a Radical Government, it was 89 millions. If the Radical party had brought forward and supported in a genuine manner a motion for the reduction of expenditure—and when the expenditure came to such a sum as 89 millions it was about time—it must have been carried, and the Government must have either submitted or resigned. But they contented themselves with one or two bogus speeches and one or two sham motions. The Ministers laughed at them, and the estimate went on merrily rolling up. As regards reform, great have been the promises; meagre have been the performance. My contention is that there has been no obstruction sufficient to excuse her Majesty's Government. They have a majority of 100 in the House of Commons. They have had four years of uncontrolled power, and yet their programme is scarcely touched—just nibbled at and nothing more. To go to the country and tell the country that that is the fault of the Tory party is just as though some great hulking fellow, six feet high, with sufficient strength to fell an ox, were to go running whining to the magistrate and complain that he had been assaulted and hindered in his work by some tiny little boy six years of age. Referring to the Mer-

chant Shipping Bill, I am disposed to place immense reliance on Mr. Chamberlain's statements. But my opinion has been altogether changed by Mr. Chamberlain's own conduct. Mr. Chamberlain is in this dilemma—either he is content for party purposes to allow the lives of British sailors to be wantonly sacrificed when by legislation he may prevent that sacrifice, or else all the statements which he has made against the shipowners are untrue from beginning to end; in which case a class and a trade upon which the whole of their industry depended has been cruelly, malignantly, fruitlessly, and to no purpose aspersed, damaged and held up to public odium. Mr. Chamberlain's conduct has not been genuine in this matter, and it warrants me in saying, and it warrants you in believing, that the Radical party is all humbug. As regards the extension of the franchise, I will quote from a speech by Mr. Bright in 1858, in which he said that, whenever a Reform Bill is introduced, "never take your eyes for one moment from the question of redistribution of seats, for in it lies the great subject of dispute, and, unless you guard your rights, you will have to fight your battle over again, and begin it again the very day after the Bill has passed." But now all is changed. Not only is redistribution not mentioned in the Government Reform Bill, but even the very plan is not disclosed, and the modern Radicals literally hoot at any one who, acting on the indisputable maxim of Mr. Bright, expresses the slightest curiosity on the subject. Does not this make clear the position that the Radical party of the present day and the Radical party of the old day are two different parties? One was a party of high principles; the other is a party of low expediency. The fault I find with the present Government and with the Radical party is this—that they will never face real difficulties. The assimilation of the county and borough franchise is simple enough for any intellect—almost easy enough for any fool. But the question of redistribution demands the highest qualities of constructive statesmanship, and for that reason it is thrown aside. I came here to-night to ask you whether this slipshod, slovenly, happy-go-lucky, and, I may add, dishonest mode of proceeding is worthy of a British Government or worthy of the English people. I do not know what would be the policy of the Tory party. I am not the least bit in the confidence of the leaders. They have preserved a prudent—perhaps an over-prudent—reticence. This much I can safely say, however, I do not for a moment imagine that their Government would be more feeble or more unfortunate than the present, and I hope and believe they would do much better, and that their policy should be one of

honesty and courage. It should be a policy which will grapple with difficulties and deal with them, and not avoid them or postpone them. It should be a popular policy, and not a class policy. It should be a policy of activity for the national welfare, combined with a zeal for the Imperial security."

Colonel Burnaby on the same occasion referred to the campaign in the Soudan. He condemned the policy which the Government had adopted in reference to Egyptian affairs, and described minutely the military operations that had taken place in Egypt. He considered that the Government ought to have taken more active measures at the outset of the Egyptian complications than they had done, and the delay in sending military forces to Egypt had culminated in disaster.

Lord R. CHURCHILL, on April 16th, 1884, delivered his Presidential address to the Midland Conservative Club in the Town Hall, Birmingham. His lordship, in driving through the streets of the town during the day, was frequently recognised and cheered. The meeting in the evening was as large as the immense hall would permit of. Lord Randolph was accompanied to the platform by Mr. Jos. Rowlands (who took the chair), Colonel Burnaby, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, M.P., Mr. H. W. Eaton, M.P., Mr. Staveley Hill, M.P., Sir Eardley Wilmot, M.P., and Sir Henry Hoare.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, extolled the ability and reputation of Lord Randolph Churchill in Parliament and the country, and the intrepidity and capacity of Colonel Burnaby in the field.

Lord Randolph Churchill, who was received on rising with loud and long-continued cheers, first invited the club to return a vote of thanks to its late President, Lord Windsor. (Cheers.) He then expressed his own deep sense of the high honour they had done him in electing him President for the year. His lordship then proceeded :—You are a young club, but you have already made prodigious strides. You are united not only for social intercourse, but for political objects. You have banded yourselves together to support the interests of the Tory party in the Midland counties, and you can do this in the most effectual way by supplying what has long been a great want in Conservative organisations—voluntary assistance. (Cheers.) The organisation of a political party is a matter of very intense interest. In the old days before the Reform Act of 1867 political organisation was of a very different nature from what it is now. As a rule, they had the leader of the party, who was not often or very directly concerned in electoral matters. The manage-

ment of electoral organisation was generally left to the Parliamentary "Whip," who was assisted by a paid agent in the metropolis, who was generally a person of legal attainments. Between them they disposed of certain funds, known as the Reform Fund and the Carlton Fund, and they were in correspondence with certain other gentlemen in the constituencies, who also, as a rule, possessed legal attainments. These parties possessed each other's confidence, and were well calculated to carry on delicate and secret negotiations; and the ordinary concomitants of those parties which appeared at election times was a species of individual who I am happy to say has almost entirely vanished from this country, and known as the "Man in the Moon"—(laughter)—and those other individuals generally known as the free and independent electors—(continued laughter)—who always carefully deliberated so long over their votes that they rarely recorded them until just before the close of the poll. (Renewed laughter and cheers.) That is the old organisation, not at all confined to the Conservative party. (Hear.) It was equally the organisation of the Whig party, and no doubt it may have been suited to the morality of the day, and it may have been suited to the ten-pound householder; but that organisation has become quite obsolete on account of the great change which has taken place in the dimensions of our modern constituencies. Formerly the organiser had to deal with classes and cliques. Now he has to deal with intelligent, instructed, and independent masses of electors. These masses cannot be dictated to, they cannot be driven, they cannot be wire-pulled, they must be argued with and persuaded. (Cheers.) That is the first of the duties which devolve upon the members of this club. (Cheers.) I do not think I shall commit any indiscretion if I admit that as regards party organisation the Liberals have been a little ahead of the Conservative party. (Hear, hear.) They have been the first to adopt that peculiar form of organisation known as the caucus. (Hooting and cheers.) I hope you will not be shocked if I tell you that I see nothing whatever objectionable in that form of organisation. (Laughter and cheers.) The caucus simply means this, that great masses of people thinking one way feel that they are too unwieldy to manage their own affairs directly, and they confine the management to certain elected persons in whom they have confidence, and who are responsible to them. (Cheers.) But the Radicals always push things to an extreme. They have pushed the caucus to extremes for which it was never meant—(cries of "No" and cheers)—to be put to, and they have done it for ends which are undoubtedly mischievous and dangerous to the freedom of our political life. (Cheers.) The caucus, as they know

it in Birmingham, has not been content to limit its work to party organisation, but has endeavoured to interfere, more or less, and rather more than less, tyranically in dictating the policy which should be pursued in political questions by our public men. (Hear, hear.) When the Birmingham caucus presume to decide for itself public questions of the highest interest and the greatest delicacy, and to issue its mandates to other associations in the country, and even to members of Parliament, the caucus altogether transgresses the limits of its functions. (Cheers.) The Conservative party, though perhaps it does not move so rapidly, moves more surely than the Liberals. The former have their popular organisation. The Conservative associations, so far as I know, have always confined themselves to the duties of party organisation, and have not attempted to follow the evil examples which have been set to them by their Liberal friends in Birmingham. (Hear, hear.) Our organisation is quite as popular as the Liberal organisation. In Lancashire, Yorkshire, and some parts of the south of England these Conservative associations have spread and flourished, but there still remains a great field of work which is yet untouched. I take this opportunity of saying that the National Union of Conservative Associations is the centre and nucleus not of all, but of many, of the Conservative associations throughout the country. The aim of the Union is to extend not only in our great towns, but in our counties, and also in our villages and hamlets, popular principles of Conservative organisation. (Cheers.) The Union has made great efforts in this direction. It does not meet with quite as much encouragement at head-quarters as I should like to see, for there is still a small knot of people whose minds dwell affectionately on the past, and who look back with some longing to the happy days when organisation was conducted on those elementary principles, which I have described. (Laughter.) They regard with some apprehension the popular voice, but I have no doubt all this will soon subside. I look to this and other associations to popularise the organisation of our party. Our object is to obtain a representative executive who will hold themselves responsible to the electors who appoint them. In fact, my idea, and it is the idea of my friends, is that the Tory party shall be like the English people—a self-governing party. (Cheers.) That is the only form of organisation by which Conservatives can attract great masses of the people to the support of the political opinions they profess. It is in the power of such associations as this to give the most enlightened instruction to the mass of the people on subjects which, undoubtedly, most intimately concern their welfare. I would especially urge upon you the importance of taking steps for the foundation of clubs

for the artisan classes. (Cheers.) My idea in political organisation is to try everything. We may fail, but at any rate until we fail we do not know whether the thing is good or bad. (Hear, hear.) In the great county of Lancaster there are numbers of these citizen clubs in all the large towns, and I believe that is one of the reasons why the Tory party is so strong there. (Hear, hear.) Let Birmingham also lead the way in this matter. Birmingham has done much service to the Liberal party in party organisation. Let it be a little impartial, and do good service to the Conservative party also in this respect. (Cheers.) Let the extension and popularising of the organisation of the Conservative party be the aim of every member of the Midland Conservative club. That is my respectful and humble advice to you as your President for the year. (Cheers.) Above all things, let us be up and stirring. Do not let us go to sleep. I have a sort of idea that an election is not far off. (Hear, hear.) I do not quite know the week when it will come (laughter), but I can scent it in the air, and my opinions on this subject, which a day or two ago only partook of the nature of suspicions, have almost deepened into absolute certainty from the curious act which is now being done by a certain Minister. Sir William Harcourt—(hooting and cheers)—has gone down to his constituents at Derby. (Laughter.) Now, since the year 1880, when, owing to a consultation between Mr. Plimsoll and his family—(laughter)—a vacancy was found for the wandering Home Secretary—(laughter)—Sir William Harcourt has not been near his constituents to address them on public affairs, and my idea is that Sir William Harcourt would not have gone near his constituents if he had not certain reasons for knowing that he may have to meet them in a disagreeable way before long. (Renewed laughter.) I think it my duty to remind you that the last election, which was undoubtedly disastrous to the Conservative party, was lost by us principally on account of our defective and neglected organisation. (Hear, hear.) I can tell you as a matter of fact, that that was the opinion of Lord Beaconsfield —(loud cheers)—and no better judge of politics has ever existed in this country. (Cheers.) Now, for Heaven's sake, do not let us be caught napping again. I am certain that if every Conservative in the country will endeavour to realise to himself for a moment the immense political questions involved in the next election he will not lose a moment before plunging into the fray and offering his services to the Conservative Association or Conservative candidate of his locality. (Cheers.) Why, in the election which is coming before long the first principles of our English politics are involved. The Radical party of the present day are so numerous, so bold, and so enterprising—(cheers and hooting)—that if the Tory party are not on their guard, and

do not equal them in activity, they will wake up one morning to find that the English Constitution has entirely disappeared, and that some pinchbeck American arrangement has been substituted in its stead. (Cheers and laughter.) May I say something on the first principles of our politics, and endeavour to impress upon you the nature of the topics which you should not be afraid of dealing with when you are endeavouring to persuade to your views the mass of electors? After all, what is the great difference which distinguishes the two great political parties who endeavour to attract the support of the English people? The Tory party cling with veneration and affection to the institutions of our country. (Hear, hear.) The Radicals regard them with aversion, and will always give multitudinous and specious reasons for their unhappy frame of mind. (Laughter.) But can we give no good and convincing reason to the people for the faith which is in us? We do not defend the Constitution from any silly sentiment for the past, or from any superstition about Divine right or hereditary excellence. We defend the Constitution solely on the ground of its utility to the people. (Cheers.) It is on the ground of utility alone that we go forth to meet our foe, and if we fail to make good our ground in utilitarian arguments and for utilitarian ends, then let the present combination of Throne, Lords, and Commons be for ever swept away. (Cheers.) The hereditary throne is the surest device which has ever been imagined or invented for the perpetuation of civil order, and for that first necessity of civilised society, a continuity of government, and he will be a bold man in argument who will assert that the hereditary character of the British throne is a vice, or even a defect, when we remember that the English monarchy has endured for upwards of a thousand years. What device of the wisest philosopher or the most acute mathematician could have discovered a monarch more perfect for all the purposes of monarchy than the one whom hereditary descent of a thousand years has provided for us? (Prolonged cheers.) There are many in this town who glibly tell you that the monarchy is too expensive for us. I reply that it would be impossible to devise a form of governmental security as effective, and yet cheaper and more simple—(cheers)—and that if in an evil hour we were to listen to these silly tatlers, the sums of money which we should ultimately have to pay for police and military in times of administrative changes—the fluctuations of credit, the displacements of capital, the losses to the interests of industry and labour, which constant inevitable administrative changes will produce, and the destruction of property which, in the absence of any recognised central authority, they will at

times occasion—instead of being counted by the few hundreds of thousands which are the cost price of a hereditary throne, will be counted by millions and millions. (Cheers.) So much for the first estate of the realm, which the Radical party calmly threatens and darkly scowls at. The immediate object of the Radical detestation is the House of Lords, in which they pretend to discover all the most execrable forms of class prejudice and privilege. I have no doubt that much of the enthusiasm with which the Radical party clamours for the Reform Bill is due to the hopes they entertain that the passage of the Bill may possibly provoke a conflict between the Lords and the Commons, in which the Lords might for ever go down. (Hear, hear.) I am not concerned to defend all the actions of the House of Lords in modern times, but I could, if I like, point to many bright instances of statesmanship and liberality on their part. (Cheers.) The House of Lords makes mistakes at times, I have no doubt; but even in this respect they will compare very favourably with Mr. Gladstone's Government—(laughter)—or even with the Radical party. (Continued laughter.) I maintain that the House of Lords should be preserved solely on the hard ground of its utility to the people. I find in it a check to popular impulses arising from imperfect information—not only an aggregation of political wisdom and experience such as no other country could produce, but above all I find in it the only effectual barrier against that most fatal blow to freedom—the one-man power—(cheers)—that power which has more than once enslaved the liberties of France, and which every moment terrifies the defenceless citizens of the United States. In Birmingham, on a small scale, you have had some little experience of the one-man power. (Loud cheers.) Well, from a National and Imperial point of view, we need never be alarmed about the danger of the one-man power so long as the House of Lords endures, be he minister, be he capitalist, be he demagogue, be he Mr. Gladstone, or Mr. Chamberlain—(hooting and cheers)—or Mr. Schnadhorst—(hooting and cheers)—or Mr. Bradlaugh—(laughter)—or the Claimant. (Loud laughter.) Against that bulwark of popular liberty and civil order he will dash himself in vain. The House of Lords may perhaps move slowly, be over-cautious about accepting the merits of the legislation of the House of Commons, and be extreme in their solicitude for the rights of property. That is the small price the people have to pay for being guarded against so great a danger. The House of Lords are recruited from the people, their long descent and lofty aims enable them to fear neither Ministers nor men. They fear only the people, whose trustees

they are. I defend also on utilitarian grounds the Church of England, that other bugbear of the Radical party, because of its efforts not only for religion, but in the cause of education and charity. When compared with other creeds and sects it is essentially the Church of English liberty, including all shades of religious thought and all conditions of men. I cannot imagine that the English people will ever gratify sectarian animosities, or pander to infidel proclivities by demolishing that institution which elevates a nation, and consecrates the action of a State. (Cheers.) Last, but not least—first rather in the scheme of Tory politics—come the Commons of England, with their marvellous history, their ancient descent, their unequalled principles, and I believe their splendid future. The social progress of the people by means of legislative reform in the lines, and carried on under the protection of the institutions whose utility I have described to you—that must be the policy of the Tory party. (Cheers.) The industries of the people must be stimulated and protected by a lightening of the load of taxation and by a large redistribution of the incidence of taxation. (Hear, hear.) Our efforts to emancipate our brethren from the vices of an undeveloped civilization, such as intemperance, crime, and a weak standard of morality, must be encouraged and facilitated. No class interests should be allowed to stand in the way of this mighty movement, and with this movement the Tory party must not only sympathise, but identify itself. Social reform, producing direct and immediate benefit to the community—that must be the Conservative cry, as opposed to the foolish scream for organic change by the Radicals, who waste their time in attacking institutions whose destruction would only endanger popular freedom. While we leave the social condition of the people precisely where it was before, we must apply this test to every legislative proposal—every political movement—every combination of circumstances and phenomena, and we shall know the line of action to adopt. (Cheers.) I have long tried to make as my motto the phrase used recently by Mr. Gladstone, "Trust the people." There are a few in the Conservative party who have still that lesson to learn, and who do not yet understand that the Tory party of to-day must no longer be dependent upon the small and narrow class identified with the ownership of land: but that its strength must be found and developed in our large towns as well as our country districts. (Cheers.) Trust the people, and they will follow us in the defence of the Constitution against any and every foe. I may be asked, "Why, if you trust the people, did you vote against the Reform Bill?" It is a plausible, but a foolish question. The government of England is a government by party, and it

is a general duty of the followers of Sir Stafford Northcote—(cheers)—to resist the legislation proposed by Mr. Gladstone (laughter.) My actual reason for voting against the Reform Bill was the omission from it of redistribution. (Cheers.) Extension of the franchise and redistribution are one and indivisible. I did not vote against it from distrust of the people. The agricultural labourer will never demolish the Constitution. I have no fear of the democracy. Given a fair arrangement of the constituencies, and one part of England would correct and balance the other. But I do not think electoral reform is a matter of national urgency. I believe that Parliament can better devote its time to other matters, such as finance, local taxation, commerce, Ireland, and Egypt. It is, however, a matter of ministerial and party urgency, and it is being treated as a matter of party tactics, and for the purpose of uniting and stimulating a nearly shattered Liberal majority. It was for these reasons I voted against the Reform Bill. The English Constitution will endure and thrive whether we add two millions or two hundred to the electorate. So long as the Tory party is true to its principles, mindful of its history, faithful to the policy bequeathed to it by Lord Beaconsfield, the future of the Constitution and the destinies of the Empire are in the hands of the Tory party, and if only the leaders of the party in Parliament will have the courage of their convictions, grasp their responsibilities, and adapt their policy to those responsibilities, and if they are supported and stimulated by the people in the large towns, that future and those destinies are great and assured. (Cheers.) To rally the people round the throne, to unite the throne with the people—a loyal throne and a patriotic people—that is our policy, and that is our faith. (Cheers.)

Lord R. CHURCHILL and Colonel BURNABY were entertained on April 17th, 1884, at a banquet at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham, at which Sir R. Temple presided, and the former, in responding to the toast of "Our Guests," said:—"Sir William Harcourt's speech to his constituents at Derby is in part marked by a feature which is not usually prominent in Ministerial speeches—candour and modesty. He compared himself to a mountain stream which has developed into a mighty river, and he says that whereas in former days he used to be a brawler, a bubbler, and a babbler, he has now become gentle, fertile, and dull. I will not question the accuracy of Sir William Harcourt's description of himself as far as relates to former days, but when Sir William Harcourt describes the present Home Secretary as "gentle," he wanders

into the region of romance; when he describes himself as "fertile," he is anticipating the future; and when he describes himself as "dull," he deviates into truth. He said that the one thing which he longs for of all others is what he calls the "wild freshness" of Opposition, and I imagine that we are all gathered here to-night to gratify the Home Secretary's wish. Sir W. Harcourt went on to criticise the action of the Opposition in Parliament, and said the Opposition has no other object in view than to worry her Majesty's Government out of office. Not very long ago Sir William Harcourt thought it part of his duty to worry an English Government with much the same amount of ferocity as a bull-dog worries a cat; but those were the days when he enjoyed the wild freshness of Opposition. Even if he is correct in the description which he gives of the policy of the Opposition, the Opposition would not be in the least to blame; but I question the correctness of the description, and I do not think that the Opposition has any desire of worrying her Majesty's Government out of office. What has been our object, and what we are endeavouring to do is to worry her Majesty's Government to a performance of their duty. I am bound to say, from one reason and another, principally from the hopeless character of the present Government, that the Opposition has not been successful in its efforts, and the Government still continues to wander everywhere but in the path of duty. Yesterday, in describing the policy of the Government, the Home Secretary said they intend, having saved Egypt from a military insurrection, to settle her affairs, and leave the Egyptians to govern themselves. There are two alternatives, and the Government, as far as I can make out, declined to adopt either. They will not settle the affairs of Egypt, nor will they leave the Egyptians to govern themselves. Time passes very quickly, and we are apt to forget that her Majesty's Government has been nearly two years in Egypt; in the month of August next it will be two years since the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, and without any doubt whatever, things are worse in that country than they were, when the battle of Tel-el-Kebir was fought. The administration of justice, the arrangements for police are worse; the financial indebtedness of the country has increased, and the country is in a ruinous condition. The native army which was to be established under our auspices is universally acknowledged to be utterly worthless and ruinously expensive, and what everyone wants to know all over the country is, when are the Government going to begin their work. It really reminds me of the refrain of a song which used to be very popular, the chorus of which is—

"First she would and then she wouldn't,
Then she could and then she couldn't."

That exactly describes the proceedings of the Government towards Egypt, and so they go on with wearisome monotony. Sir William Harcourt says that he would not protect, and he would not take up the administration of Egypt, and he says that we were precluded from adopting these courses by our engagements to Europe. But he entirely forgets whether he is right or wrong in the statement which he made that we are under the most solemn engagements to Europe to establish order in Egypt and restore the efficiency of the Egyptian Government. These engagements to Europe are of far more importance than the other engagements which Sir William Harcourt mentioned, and though the patience of Europe had been long, and her forbearance great, I cannot believe that the nations of Europe will tolerate the state of things which go on in Egypt much longer, and before very long a heavy account will be presented against Her Majesty's Government for damage to the interests of European nations at Cairo. In the course of a few months I have no doubt they will have to send a large military force to Khartoum, either to support General Gordon, or to rescue him, or to avenge his death. They will have to take over the Egyptian administration because they have by their policy utterly and hopelessly destroyed the native administration, and they will have to make proposals to Europe for the settlement of Egyptian finance, and for the abolition of the International tribunal. They must make these proposals, I believe, to the Power of Europe in Congress, and if they are prepared to give to the Powers of Europe a guarantee for the preservation of order in Egypt, and a guarantee to some extent for Egyptian indebtedness, I make no doubt whatever that they will get from Europe a mandate which will permit them to protect effectually British interests in the East. That is, I firmly believe, the inevitable policy which is falling upon the country; it is no use the country complaining, because that was the price which they have to pay for indulging in the luxury of a Gladstonian Administration. As far as I can make out, the first step towards carrying out that policy—the first essential step—is to get rid of the present Government. They have had many times unequalled forbearance on the part of the people; they have failed and failed over and over again."

In conclusion, Lord Randolph expressed the pleasure he felt not only at the unusual and marked kindness which had been shown to him, but at the extraordinary amount of political enthusiasm which had been developed in Birmingham on the side of the Conservative party. Colonel Burnaby also replied,

On April 17th, 1884, Lord R. CHURCHILL laid the foundation stone of a new Church of England School at Sparkhill, in the parish of Yardley, near Birmingham. The school is being erected to avoid the necessity of a School Board. There was a large and distinguished assembly, including Colonel Burnaby, Sir Richard Temple, and Sir Edmund Lechmere. Lord Randolph Churchill, after laying the stone, said that being acquainted with the history of the circumstances which led to the occasion, he thought it an interesting illustration of the manner in which our national system of education worked. The noble lord continued:—The policy of the great Act of 1870 has been mistaken by some of those who are actively engaged in the work of education. (Hear, hear.) It has been supposed that the object of that Act was to abolish voluntary schools. The object of the Act was nothing of the kind. (Applause.) The object of the late Act was to develop the national education of England by supplementing rather than by suppressing the voluntary schools which already existed. Voluntary schools wherever they existed, and carried on national education according to the law of the land, were not only to be countenanced by the State, but were to receive from the State a certain amount of pecuniary assistance. That was the policy of the Education Act of 1870, and that was the policy which, I make bold to say, Parliament will continue to follow. (Hear, hear.) I believe that the question of national education must shortly be dealt with by Parliament in a large and liberal spirit, and I believe that it is undoubtedly connected with the great question of local taxation. I know of no method more appropriate or more politic by which the local burden could be relieved than by the State taking upon itself the whole expense connected with the national education of the country. (Hear, hear.) This will be done, I have no doubt, by following the lines of the Education Act of 1870, by the State availing itself of all the machinery which it finds at work and actually in existence for the purpose of promoting education, and by subsidizing that machinery, whatever may be its nature—(applause)—to the extent of the expense they may have incurred in the elementary education of each child. That I believe, gentlemen, will be the work of a future Parliament. I trust that it will be a work which will not be long delayed. National education is of the highest importance to the people of this century. Parliament is about to confer upon the people of this country a large, a very large, extension of political votes. (Hear, hear.) That, at any rate, appears

to be the policy of the House of Commons at the moment, and if we wish the people of England to be in a position to avail themselves to the very utmost of these political rights, and to use these political privileges for the benefit of their country, we must not be slack, but, on the contrary, we must be forward and active in prompting the work of education among our children. (Hear, hear.) It is, gentlemen, in the hope that the voluntary schools, the foundation of one of which I have had the honour of laying to-day, may continue to co-operate with activity, with intelligence, with moderation, in the work of national education that I have come here to address a few words to you to-day. And in that hope I am sure all of you present will join. At all times I should consider it one of the chief parts of my duty, as a member of the House of Commons, to take the most earnest interest, and to do all that is in my power, to promote the national education of the people by assisting the voluntary schools. (Applause.)

A vote of thanks was passed to Lord Randolph Churchill, on the motion of Sir R. Temple, seconded by Colonel Burnaby, who received a most enthusiastic welcome.

Lord RANDOLPH after his electioneering campaign at Birmingham felt fatigued, and so could not attend the annual dinner of the Primrose League; and the letter below shows his attitude towards the new organisation instituted to keep alive the memory of the late Earl of Beaconsfield.

The first annual dinner of the Primrose League took place at the Freemasons' Tavern, on Saturday evening, the 19th April, 1884. The Earl of Egmont presided, and among those present were—the Earl of Limerick, Viscount Curzon, Lord Glentworth, Lord Colchester, Lord Henry Vane-Tempest, Mr. W. T. Marriott, M.P., Mr. Coleridge Kennard, M.P., Sir A. Slade, Sir Henry Hoare, Sir A. Borthwick, Sir A. Cooper, Sir John Shelley, Sir Samuel Wilson, Sir Reginald Beauchamp, the Hon. Claud Hay, the Hon. and Rev. L. Isbey, Colonel Malleson, C.S.I., Colonel Burnaby, Captain FitzGeorge, R.N., Mr. Percy Mitford, Mr. A. Fellowes, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. Bateson, Mr. Ponsonby Moore, &c. The members of the League present, who numbered between 500 and 600, all wore button-holes of primroses in addition to their badges, while the tables were gaily decked with the same flowers, and two handsome wreaths of primroses surmounted the chair.

Letters of apology were read from several noblemen and gentlemen who were unable to be present, amongst others from Lord Randolph Churchill, M.P., who wrote as follows: "The

23969

work of the past week at Birmingham which devolved upon me was more arduous than I had anticipated, and my doctor has ordered me to keep quiet and in the house for the next two or three days. Under these circumstances, and remembering that the work of Parliament recommences on Monday, and is likely to be unusually heavy, I do not like to disobey his orders. May I take this opportunity of expressing to you the very considerable interest which I feel in the success of the Primrose League, with the preliminary organisation of which I have to some extent had the honour of being connected. I believe that as a foundation, not only for preserving vividly the memory of the greatest of all Tories, but also for carrying actively into practical effect those principles of popular government which he so nobly inculcated, the Primrose League is destined to stimulate existing Conservative organisations, to attract to that organisation large numbers who might otherwise remain indifferent or apathetic, and to contribute largely to the diffusion amongst our fellow-countrymen of all those principles of patriotism, liberty, and Imperial rule which animated and adorned Lord Beaconsfield's astonishing career." Telegrams of a congratulatory nature were also read from branches of the league in various provincial towns, including Liverpool, Bradford, Birmingham, and Brighton.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

On Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL'S opening speech in Birmingham on April 15th, 1884.

The *Times* admitted that, in his speech at Birmingham, Lord Randolph Churchill had showed that he could be vigorous and incisive without descending to personalities. Yet this theory that the Radical party was all humbug, or rather had departed widely from its old principles, was little more than a statement that among the votaries of every creed there are large numbers who know nothing whatever of its spirit or its principles. As much could be shown to be true of the Conservative party. An incidental drawback to the method employed by Lord Randolph Churchill at Birmingham was that it left an audience very much at a loss to know what his own views really were. It was all very well to condemn a Government pledged to peace for carrying on war in Egypt; what we really wanted to know was whether that war was called for in the interests of the country, not whether it was justified by certain ancient maxims. People naturally wanted to know, besides, what Lord Randolph and his friends would do were they in office. Would they

literally guide themselves by the formulas which the Government is condemned for forgetting, or would they adapt their policy to the needs of the hour? In the latter case, what was their view of those needs and the policy demanded? Lord Randolph Churchill declared, with great frankness, that he was "not the least bit in the confidence of the leaders" of his party. Unhappily, we were all in the same plight, but that was all the more reason why Lord Randolph should have told us his policy. He did, indeed, tell us that it was a policy of honesty and courage, a policy of grappling with difficulties instead of avoiding them. But these were abstract formulas like those of the Manchester school, and what the country wants is guidance in present difficulties. Lord Randolph Churchill might have made a better use of his great powers than by following illustrious but pernicious examples in constructing elaborate arguments which have no solid foundation and no real bearing upon the wants of the country.

The *Morning Post* observed that as Lord Randolph Churchill occupied the distinguished position of having done more than any other man to expose the utter sham of Liberal promises and performances, his reception at Birmingham with such boundless enthusiasm must be taken as a notable sign of the times. In his speech Lord Randolph condemned the harmful vagaries of modern Radicalism with his customary force and ability. He did not hesitate to tell a variety of unpleasant truths about the caucus and the party which protects it—a party whose professed principles he characterised as humbug. "This," comments the *Morning Post*, "is plain speaking, but it is just what is required under present circumstances. There is still a pretence among the Ministerialists that they have still a right to carry on their banner the motto 'Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform.' Lord Randolph Churchill had no difficulty last night in effectually showing how hollow a pretence this is. Instead of peace the present Government have given the country the war of a most bloody type; instead of retrenchment they have wasted millions of the nation's money upon dangerous and fruitless adventures; and in place of reform they supply gratuitous attacks upon the constitution. In condemnation of these indisputable facts, Lord Randolph Churchill's language is not one whit stronger than the circumstances demand, and to-day it will find an almost universal echo in the country."

The *Standard* characterised Lord Randolph Churchill's speech at Birmingham as a spirited effort, with many telling points. Lord Randolph going forth against the Radicals of Birmingham was like David going forth against Goliath, the case being one in which, while failure brought no disgrace, victory

brought immense glory. Whether the noble lord would succeed in opening the eyes of the working men he was addressing to the imposture of the Birmingham form of Radicalism remained to be seen. But he "can hardly fail to pave the way for that desirable consummation. In many respects he is well fitted for the task. We seldom admire the tone of his speeches in the House of Commons; but he has the humour and the power of expression which are just suited to a popular audience; and in this particular talent is certainly superior to his opponents. He has the courage which is always appreciated by Englishmen, or he would not be where he is, and, as he is thoroughly at home in the political and Parliamentary history of the last few years, he may catch his adversaries tripping where they least expect it. He has, moreover, to support him at the present moment, the whole of that general indignation with the Ministerial failure in Egypt which is not likely to be cooler at Birmingham than elsewhere; and though he does not speak with all the weight and authority of men who either are or have been in the Cabinet, and have taken rank among statesmen, it may be questioned whether in any other particular either Mr. Bright or Mr. Chamberlain has the advantage of him."

The *Daily Telegraph* said: "Lord Randolph adopted bold tactics, trying to prove that the Radicals had been flagrantly unfaithful to their principles. He blamed them for departing from 'peace, retrenchment, and reform,' and expounded his own peculiarly mixed political philosophy. His views, however, are of little moment compared with the end he seeks to accomplish, and the principle of free election which he is bent on putting to the test in Birmingham."

The *Daily News* accepted as certain that Lord Randolph Churchill aspired to be member of Birmingham, and was inclined to say that after a while, when he was sobered down, and steadied himself, and grown more solid and less mercurial, he would have a fair chance of becoming leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons. For the moment, the Conservative party was sadly in need of men having the requisite qualities of leadership. Therefore, Lord Randolph Churchill, if anxious to be leader, was advised by the *Daily News* to "go at once into training for the place. He ought to cultivate self-control, seriousness, the avoidance of exaggeration, the wholesome dread of extravagance. He ought to renounce posturing, to forswear everything that savours of the schoolboy, or suggests the merry-Andrew. The question was what would be left of Lord Randolph Churchill if he were to prune himself down in this way! He could not be a leader if he did; but would he be anything at all if he did?"

SPEECHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.
(SESSION, 1884.)

On the 3rd of March, 1884, Sir W. LAWSON (for whose Life see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 1) moved the adjournment of the House of Commons, in order to discuss the state of affairs in Egypt, and the policy of the Government in the Soudan, when Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL spoke as follows:—

"I consider that if the Government sits silent under the speech which has been delivered by the leader of the Opposition, they will plead guilty. (Opposition cheers.) Is there absolutely no reply to make? The right hon. gentleman had only asked once more, for the hundredth time since Parliament met, for a clear statement of the Government policy. That, sir, is the demand which not only the Opposition and the whole country make, but which the whole of Europe makes. (Opposition cheers.) What are you doing now, and what do you intend to do? Her Majesty's Government are not only spending enormous sums of money on military and naval operations, and are not only careless in asking the vote of Parliament for these operations, but, in response to hopeless appeals of every sort for an explanation of their policy, they preserve an absolute and inviolable silence. I want hon. gentlemen opposite to recollect the indignation of the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues at the policy which the late Government pursued in a time of the gravest crisis, because, as they said, they did not give full information to Parliament. (Hear, hear.) You are now in occupation of Egypt, and more or less in occupation of the Soudan. The Government is committing the country to Heaven knows what, and no power on earth can extract a tittle of information from them. What is the policy of the Government? I was surprised when the hon. baronet got up to move the adjournment of the House that only two other members of the Radical party (Mr. Labouchere and Mr. Passmore Edwards) rose in support of him. (Ministerial cheers.) After a battle without exception the bloodiest this country has fought for years—a battle absolutely unprovoked except by the Government—(laughter)—the representatives of the peace party in this House literally allowed the only sincere man amongst them to stand up alone. (Renewed laughter.) I have said in the country, and I repeat it now, that the Radical party is all humbug. (Laughter.) Can I desire a stronger proof of that assertion than the conduct of the Radical party to-night? Where, I should like to know, after this frightful slaughter, is the right hon. gentleman the member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright), the apostle of peace? He stood at the door, looked in for a moment, saw the subject was awkward, and ran away.

(Laughter.) Where is the member for Merthyr? He is here now, but was he in the House when the hon. baronet stood up? (Cries of "Order.") The hon. member, who is the President of the Peace Society, and who wishes to settle all matters by arbitration—did he get up and support the hon. baronet in his condemnation of this most ruthless slaughter by the Government? (Opposition cheers.) Will the Government explain this? If not, it will be for the country to explain it for them. (Renewed cheers.) Will they explain why they thought proper to censure the late Government for the invasion of Zululand for the purpose of protecting our British Colony, and themselves attack an Arab chief in the Soudan deserts—with the master of whom they have made peace—who threatened no British colony; who only threatened, or said he was going to threaten, a fort which you admit you are going to abandon? (Cheers.) Will the Government explain why they thought proper to make peace with the Transvaal Boers after having sustained three disgraceful defeats, and now, for no object whatsoever, make an absolutely unprovoked attack on this Arab chief, slaughtering with their superior weapons, 3,000 or 4,000 of his followers? Will you explain that inconsistency? Now I come to the hypocrisy of the Government. (Ministerial laughter.) I asked the Secretary of State for War on Tuesday whether General Graham had power to negotiate with Osman Digna, and the noble lord told me that he supposed General Graham had the usual instructions which British generals had. It is quite clear that General Graham did not have powers to negotiate with Osman Digna, because on Wednesday the Government despatched a telegram to the general ordering him to enter into negotiations with Osman Digna. What are those negotiations? A British officer is sent out with a piece of paper containing a message, written most probably in English—("Oh," and Ministerial laughter)—which he sticks in the sand at a distance of two or three miles from the fortifications, and then retires—(laughter)—considering he has done all that is necessary for the purpose of entering into negotiations with Osman Digna. Do the Government think they have satisfied the demands of humanity by this extraordinary and ridiculous proceeding, and by then going on with perfect impunity to slaughter the Arabs. (Hear, hear.) Are these the kind of negotiations that were meant to be carried on with Osman Digna? Were there not natives with General Graham who could have explained to Osman Digna the views of the Government, and have told them they were no longer fighting an effete and corrupt Government, but against British forces? (Opposition cheers.) How can you say you have satisfied the claims of humanity by sending out this message? Now, sir

about this defence of Suakin, I want the House to remark what the Prime Minister says. He wishes the House to believe that this expedition was necessary for its defence. But then I ask why was not it undertaken weeks and weeks ago, because this is certain—that the Government would never have sent the expedition had they not been forced to do so by the House of Commons. Now the right hon. gentleman stated that if we had defended Suakin in the way the hon. baronet suggests, we should have had to leave a garrison in the place, and have been left there for an indefinite period. What is the conclusion we must draw from that? Then the course her Majesty's Government is proposing means we are to come away from Suakin. This only makes the conduct of the Government more hopelessly guilty; for in defending a town which they intend to evacuate they had slaughtered 3,000 or 4,000 Arabs. The Government may think this a matter unworthy of their notice, but Brighton did not think it—(loud Opposition cheers)—and a day will come—and it may be very soon—when Brighton will not be the only constituency in this country which will have to give its judgment on the policy of the Government, and then the Government may regret, when it is too late, that they did not yield to the entreaties of the hon. baronet and the leader of the Opposition to state frankly their policy. The pretext thought good enough by the Prime Minister to give to the House only proves to me how extraordinarily the House of Commons has sunk in the eyes of the right hon. gentleman. (Laughter.) He says it was well known in war that movements which are offensive in their nature are sometimes defensive in their essence.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Offensive in their form.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: What does that come to, that the attack of General Graham was offensive in its form, but not in its nature? (Laughter.) Three thousand men or more were slaughtered, as a matter of form, by movements which were not offensive in their nature! A Reuter's telegram informs us that Osman Digna, with a large force, is encamped in the neighbourhood of Suakin, so that it becomes all the more necessary to have a frank statement by the Government. The Prime Minister the other night accepted the policy of the hon. baronet, "Rescue and Retire!" Whom did we rescue? The 300 soldiers in Tokar. But the greater part of the garrison fought against England at Teb, and they were perfectly happy among the followers of Osman. (Laughter.) It was only after the victory of General Graham that they thought it more prudent to express some kind of satisfaction with her Majesty's troops. They were not, I say, rescued, and I call it not the relief, but the recapture,

of Tokar, for Tokar had already fallen. I now ask whether the phrase "retire" governs the policy of the Government? Do they intend retiring from Suakin and Khartoum; and if so, when; and when do they mean to carry out the policy of retiring from Egypt proper? The whole of Europe and this country are under the impression that her Majesty's Government are going, within a short time, to retire from Egypt. Will they state that intention openly, and take the judgment of the House upon it? If, again, they mean to occupy Egypt with all the resources of the Empire, let them get up and tell us so, and take the judgment of the House upon it. I hope that until we get a definite statement as to one or other of these policies, hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House will absolutely refuse to grant the supplies necessary to carry on the Government. (Opposition cheers.)

On the motion for the third reading of the Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill, on March 26th, 1884,

Lord R. CHURCHILL rose to move as an amendment, "That this House is of opinion that it would be inexpedient to assent to the third reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill before receiving further information as to the military operations in the Eastern Soudan, the position of General Gordon at Khartoum, and the policy of the Government in Egypt proper." When I gave notice of my motion last evening, the noble marquis held out some kind of menace to hon. gentlemen on the Opposition side, and said that I brought it forward on behalf of the Conservative party. I think the noble marquis ought to have been aware that when he asked the indulgence of the House he had always done so on his own behalf, and representing no one but himself. (Laughter.) It appears to me that the Government are under the impression that because they have introduced a couple of extremely indifferent measures they are therefore to be enabled to perpetrate in every quarter of the world every kind of atrocity with the utmost impunity. This continual protest of the Government about raising Egyptian or foreign debates is all founded on the erroneous idea that legislation is the first business of the House of Commons. This I deny. The first business of Parliament is to grant supply to the Crown—(hear, hear)—and it is the duty of the House of Commons, when that supply is asked for, to inquire with care for what purpose it is required, in what manner it will be expended, and by what method it will be raised. (Hear, hear.) The contempt of the Home Secretary, however, for this doctrine is such that, the other evening, he

stigmatised proceedings like the present as a dirty trick. (Laughter and Opposition cheers.) I do not believe the Commons of England have been treated with more studied contempt even by Queen Elizabeth, or Henry VIII., or Charles I. Now, I wish to ask for information under three heads. With respect to the military operations in the Eastern Soudan, the situation continues extremely critical. In four weeks two battles have been fought with no tangible result, and we now learn that General Graham is starting what I would almost call a hunting expedition after the unfortunate Osman Digna, and intends possibly to fight a third battle. In the face of such events we are compelled to ask for information as to the object of such military proceedings. Then it cannot have escaped the notice of hon. gentlemen that in to-day's newspapers it is stated General Graham would re-embark for Cairo after performing the work mentioned, and leave Suakin to take care of itself. Such military operations are unprecedented, and, at any rate, it will not be said that the House of Commons has, as a whole, allowed these operations to go on without persistently asking for information. If General Graham re-embarks, the tribes will receive notice of the fact, the effect produced by the British victories will be obliterated, and Suakin will again be surrounded, and possibly will fall into the hands of what the Government are pleased to call the rebels. There is a much more serious matter I should like to notice—the way in which the forces of this country are being used to enforce slavery. (Opposition cheers.) Would it be believed that for an act which every man in this House would approve—(hear, hear)—Abyssinians who have rendered us valuable services as scouts have been punished and disbanded, while a British admiral has thought it his duty to enforce the laws permitting slavery in Egypt? Again, I would ask, have the Government finally decided to give up all intention of opening up communication between Suakin and Berber this year, and have they issued any instructions? I hold that the House has a right to pronounce upon the policy of the Government, whatever it may be, before it is carried out. But the most serious feature of the case is the position of Khartoum and General Gordon. That officer was sent to Khartoum as the last card which the Government could play. Like the ruined gambler, who found by chance a gold piece in his pocket and staked it in order to see whether he could not get back what he had lost, the Government have utilised Gordon, and with the result I have always noticed under such circumstances—failure. (Hear, hear.) They have now this absolutely before them—that the mission of General Gordon is an acknowledged and accomplished failure.

(Mr. Warton: "Hear, hear.") This being so, the question arises, What do the Government propose to do? The Prime Minister has told us that General Gordon has gone on a mission that is essentially pacific, but we now know that what remained of it was essentially warlike. (Hear, hear.) It has already commenced military operations, and possibly General Gordon is no more. What do the Government propose to do for that devoted officer? Do they intend to remain indifferent to his fate? If the question as to the policy of her Majesty's Government which I have asked had not been put to-day it could not have been put before Easter. In regard to General Gordon's mission, the Government have taken the surest course to ensure failure, and perhaps the death of that most distinguished man. (Opposition cheers.) General Gordon went to Khartoum and entered into negotiations with the leader of the native forces there; whilst, at the same time, her Majesty's Government authorised offensive military operations against a portion of those forces. Well, how could the Government imagine that General Gordon could carry on peace negotiations with any prospect of success, while they themselves, in a region not far distant, carried on military operations of an offensive character? (Opposition cheers.) I should have thought it was obvious to every one—even to the benighted minds of those who preside over the destinies of this country—(laughter)—that there was no precedent for a commander of an army opening negotiations with an enemy, and at the same time attacking and slaughtering that enemy. Such a thing has never happened where *bona-fide* peace proceedings were going on. (Hear.) The result of all we have done in Egypt is the failure of General Gordon. The military operations have had no result so far as England's policy in Egypt is concerned, though they have had very decided results so far as General Gordon and his relations with the Mahdi are concerned. When General Gordon left this country the whole of the region about Berber and Sennaar was in a state of quietude, and continued so until shortly after two bloody battles had been fought by her Majesty's Government. Then in this country for the first time we heard that the telegraph wire had been cut, that it was mended, that it was cut again, and remained cut, and that the whole country between Berber and Khartoum was in a sate of rebellion. I think that there was something like cause and effect. They have had a combination of military offensive operations, while at the same time peace negotiations—that was to say if they were really *bona-fide*—were being carried out. Has anything more ineffably silly ever been proposed to Parliament? (Opposition cheers.) General Gordon's mission deserved to fail, even if he had not

supported the Government in these military operations. The first act of General Gordon on arriving at Khartoum was to proclaim free trade in slaves. (Opposition cheers.) Her Majesty's Government did not take the course on that occasion which they were forced to take in regard to Admiral Hewett—they did not telegraph him that such a proclamation would not be tolerated by a British Parliament. General Gordon's second act was to demand for the pacification of the part of the Soudan that that most abandoned scoundrel, Zebehr Pasha, should be appointed Governor of Khartoum—Zebehr Pasha, a wretch with a record of crime which could not be surpassed by the characters of those bugbears of the Prime Minister, Acmet Aga, and Chefket Pasha. (Laughter.) I admit the gallantry and devotion with which General Gordon came to the rescue of a dying Government—(Opposition cheers)—but General Gordon is not now free from the criticism of Parliament. (Cheers.) I maintain that those two acts of General Gordon deserved the severest censure of this House, and deserved to fail. Any British officer who imagined that the country or Parliament would sanction such proceedings as General Gordon had initiated must be utterly unfit and incompetent to be employed in a position of authority as being bereft of all reason. In the face of all that has been done, what is the policy of her Majesty's Government now? They have perpetrated massacre, and perpetuated slavery. What I want to know is, What are the Government going to do next? Are her Majesty's Government going to adopt a policy of "rescue," or a policy of "retire." (Hear, hear, and laughter.) There is at least one rescue which her Majesty's Government should adopt, and that is the rescue of General Gordon—(hear)—for if the life of that man is lost owing to the negligence, indifference, callousness, or heartlessness of her Majesty's Government, that Government will not occupy their seats for twenty-four hours after the news is known. (Opposition cheers.) It seems to me that the Government are utterly unable to foresee a catastrophe or to provide for the results of a catastrophe when it has occurred. That was shown in the annihilation of Hicks Pasha's force, and in the defeat of Baker Pasha's army. Everything seems to be founded on the supposition that General Gordon must succeed; but if he succeeded it would be in the maddest journey that has ever been undertaken since that of Mahomet to the Seventh Heaven. (Cheers and laughter.) General Gordon has failed, and the Government have made no provision for the safety of General Gordon or for rescuing Egypt from the Mahdi. I do not often drop into poetry, but I think the following quotation from Henry VI. is appropriate to the question in hand:

"Amongst the soldiers this is muttered,
That here you maintain several factions;
And, whilst a field should be despatch'd and fought,
You are disputing of your generals;
One would have lingering wars, with little cost;
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings;
A third man thinks, without expense at all,
By guileful fair words peace may be obtained."

(Cheers.) Now I would ask the Government what it has done to relieve the people of Egypt from financial embarrassments. The whole thing is a question of finance; and until the finances of the country are rearranged it is impossible for a stable government to be established there. The Rothschilds' million is now gone, and everybody knows there is nothing in the Egyptian treasury. Is there anything unreasonable in asking the Government for a slight sketch of the policy they mean to adopt in regard to the finances of Egypt? Have the Government no proposals to make for relieving the country from the payment of the cost of the army of occupation, or the abolition of the law of liquidation, or the total abolition of mixed tribunals? It is impossible, in my opinion, to settle these matters without a congress of the Powers. (Hear, hear.) I believe that the initial and fatal mistake of the Prime Minister was when he abandoned that cardinal point of his foreign policy when out of office, viz., the concert of Europe. (Hear, hear.) I do not believe that this Egyptian affair will be settled until we have once more recurred to the concert of Europe. In asking for information from the Government, I do not expect to get much from the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Lord E. Fitzmaurice), who seems to occupy about the same position as myself as to the intentions of her Majesty's Government—viz., that of hopeless ignorance. (Opposition cheers and laughter.) The noble lord will, no doubt, say to me, "What then is your object in taking up the time of the House —(Ministerial cheers—is it to embarrass the Government, and to do away with the Cabinet? (Renewed Ministerial cheers). If any one entertains any such supposition they are hopelessly wrong. I have no wish whatever just now to do anything that would destroy the present Government. I am quite content that the present Government should stay where they are. (Laughter.) There are some silly people who have said that there is a want of cordiality between right hon. gentlemen on the front Opposition bench and myself. (Ironical Ministerial cheers.) The statement is too idiotic to require comment. If I were the bitterest and deadliest enemy of those right hon. gentlemen I could not wish them a worse fate, could not inflict on them a greater mortification, could not sow for them a more

fertile harvest of ruin and disgrace, than to impose on them the odious responsibility of succeeding to the task of clearing out the mess which the noble lord and his colleagues have so cleverly manufactured on the banks of the Nile. (Loud Opposition cheers.) No, I will be no party to leading those blameless and respectable right hon. gentlemen on the front Opposition bench into such a pit of perdition. (Laughter.) My object is not to elicit information, because I know that it will be useless, but rather to do what I can to arouse and stimulate public attention. I know that her Majesty's Government have a great and ineffable contempt for the House of Commons, and if it is any satisfaction to right hon. gentlemen to know, I might say that the House of Commons have the same contempt for them. (Laughter.) There is one power which has some little influence on her Majesty's Government—the power of public opinion. (Cheers and counter-cheers.) It is discussion and debate that does more to arouse, or contribute to arouse, public opinion. On this question, which so vitally affects our Empire in the East, public opinion is our only safeguard. (Cheers.) It is with this object of arousing public attention that I have laboured since the beginning of the session, and shall continue to do so whenever the arrangements of the Government afford an opportunity, perfectly regardless of any criticism or denunciation, and perfectly regardless of the progress of those legislative measures for which neither I nor the country care two penny bits. (Opposition cheers and laughter.)

On the 22nd of April, 1884, the Government having been defeated on the Cattle Bill by a majority of twenty-four, Mr. Dodson (for whose life see "Biographies of Celebrities, No. 1.") moved to report progress. Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL spoke a few words as follows :—

If the House is to understand that the motion to report progress is to lead to the resignation of the Government, I imagine it will be acceded to unanimously. (Laughter.) If, on the other hand, no such fortunate results are to be anticipated, I should like to explain the vote which I have given. I have supported the Government because I entertain doubts as to the manner in which the amendment of the House of Lords might affect the urban populations. (Laughter.) As the House of Commons in its collective capacity is of opinion that those doubts are not well founded, I certainly shall not imitate the example of the Government, but shall accept the decision in order that a valuable piece of legislation may not be imperilled

On the 29th April, 1884, on Mr. Raikes' motion on going into Committee, Lord R. CHURCHILL said: The House has been treated to the first application by the Prime Minister, in its most rigid and barbarous form, of the clôture. (Opposition cheers.) The Prime Minister is undoubtedly dissatisfied that his celebrated weapon for muzzling the House of Commons has not yet been put in practice by the Chair, and has taken the opportunity of giving the strongest hint in his power to those who sit behind him to give vent to such an amount of mechanical evidence so sonorous and so terrifying, that you (Mr. Speaker) may perhaps be intimidated into action. (Renewed Opposition cheers.) After a single speech, certainly from a member who is entitled to be heard on this subject, and perhaps more entitled than nine-tenths of the Members of this House—(hear, hear)—after only one speech dealing with the whole matter of redistribution as ably and as concisely as it could be dealt with—the Prime Minister gets up and says, "I decline to argue the matter—I decline to debate the question." (Ministerial cheers.) He says, "I keep silence, and I peremptorily order all those behind me to keep silence." (Ministerial cries of "No, no," and Opposition cheers.) I congratulate the Liberal party on the servility to which they have been reduced. Four years' unmitigated adulation has reduced them to a state of servility which I venture to say would be degrading to a Hottentot Parliament. (Opposition cheers and laughter.) I shall be curious to see whether this peremptory injunction—the most peremptory that any Prime Minister since Lord Chatham ever issued from the front bench—will be acted upon by the noble army. At any rate, it will be an interesting and instructive lesson to the country—(ironical Ministerial cheers)—as to the condition to which English Parliamentary institutions have reached. (Opposition cheers.) The Prime Minister has charged the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Raikes) with deliberate obstruction—that is, with resistance to the will of the House otherwise than by argument. When has the will of the House been declared that redistribution shall not be included in the Reform Bill? (Opposition cheers.) The House has not had an opportunity of discussing the subject. The amendment of the noble lord (Lord J. Manners), which was rejected by a majority of 130, did not raise the question of redistribution. That was merely an item in the amendment of the noble lord. (Ministerial cries of "Oh," and Opposition cheers.) The decision of the House of Commons was that it would not negative the second reading of the bill. The Prime Minister tells us that he is very anxious to deal with the question of redistribution. If I knew that the Government were going to

deal with that question after the passing of this Act, I should take very little part at all in the discussion of it. I don't attach the slightest importance to it. It is a bill which anybody could bring in and pass with a servile majority at his back. But we know that the Prime Minister is not going to deal with this question. He has said something about dealing with it next year. Where will the Prime Minister and his Government be next year? (Opposition cheers.) He would be a very bold man who would hazard a conjecture on that point. It has been said that they may be at Khartoum; but there are very long odds that they will not be on the Treasury bench. (Radical cries of "Oh.") At any rate, hon. members over there—the hon. member for Newcastle, the hon. member for Northampton and one or two other gentlemen—who would express such confidence that the Prime Minister would be on the Treasury bench then, did their utmost to turn him off the Treasury bench the other day. It was only by a majority of fifteen that the Prime Minister kept his place on the Treasury bench. Under these circumstances, it is perfectly reasonable to say that the promise that the question of redistribution will be considered next year is the most idle and frivolous promise ever given to the House of Commons. (Opposition cheers.) The Prime Minister cast no end of extremely unjust aspersions upon the right hon. gentleman because he said he wanted a genuine and sincere Reform Bill. I charge upon the Government that it is they who are insincere in this question, and that by dealing with a little bit of the subject, and utterly refusing to deal with the whole matter, they are endeavouring to mislead the country. (Opposition cheers.) If the Prime Minister will say that he will introduce a Redistribution Bill the moment that this bill is passed, he will find that the bill will slip forward much faster. Why won't he give that pledge? What is the reason that the question of redistribution is to be shelved? In order that the Home Secretary may destroy the Lord Mayor? (Opposition cheers, and laughter.) That is the only valid reason which has been given by the Government, and why should not the Home Secretary be allowed to give the poor man one year longer. (Renewed laughter.) If the Government choose to deal with the question of redistribution this year, and sacrifice their other measures, they will have ample opportunities. The fact is they have made up their minds that the most favourable electorate to which the Liberal party can appeal will be an unredistributed electorate. (Opposition cheers, and Ministerial cries of "No.") The Government are well aware that the entire rural population of the country is dead against them, and that every single country

seat which they obtained at the last election will be won back by their opponents. They hope and intend to flood the country constituencies with a body of voters who are not rural, assuming confidently that those voters will be on their side. Well, that is a trick to which I imagine the party on this side of the House will not lend itself for a moment. (Opposition cheers.) And not only is it a trick in itself, but it is one that her Majesty's Government absolutely refused to discuss, or debate, or explain. I cannot imagine that the right hon. gentleman the leader of the Opposition, will be a party to the practices of the Prime Minister. I imagine he has seen the Prime Minister try this game on before, and try it on unsuccessfully—(hear, hear)—and I cannot but think that a party which numbers 250 members of the House of Commons will know how to make the Prime Minister emerge from obstinate and gloomy silence, and debate the question of redistribution—not because we want to debate it, but that the country wants to debate it. (Opposition cheers.) Why should the Prime Minister be allowed to do what no leader of a Government has been allowed to do before? The Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867 were accompanied by large measures of redistribution. It is perfectly idle to say that redistribution is not necessary now. The right hon. gentleman the member for Cambridge University has proved that a larger measure for the transfer of seats will be rendered necessary by this bill than has ever been the case before. To put off a question of that kind to next session without giving the House any security that it will be dealt with, is a condition that all the rights of minorities must be availed of to their last extremity in order to break down. (Opposition cheers.) There will have to be a great deal of busy manufacture of evident sense before hon. members on this side of the House will give up their attempts to prove to the country the hollowness, the utter insincerity, of the position taken up by her Majesty's Government. (Opposition cheers.) In reference to what fell from the right hon. member for Cambridge University as to minority representation, he quoted me as having said that I did not care for checks or guarantees. What I said was that I did not care for the particular kind of checks and guarantees which are involved in the popularly-received notion of minority representation, because I know perfectly well that if the majority is bent upon having its way, those checks and guarantees will be swept away in a few hours. But your real guarantee will be found in a measure of redistribution. That is why, attaching as I do enormous importance to this question, I cannot support a bill which does not deal with it, or a Government which refuses to do so. With respect to the minorities in the country,

whether Conservatives or Liberals, their real protection is the House of Lords. That is the assembly which will prevent injustice being done to any class without the consent of the people. I have always looked upon that House as the only efficient protection of the rights of minorities; at any rate it is one which has lasted the longest, and, as far as I can judge at present, it seems to possess every element of endurance. (Hear, hear.) If the Government had made any statement on this question of redistribution which could have been construed as in any way affording a satisfactory assurance that it would be dealt with this session, or that the bill would not come into operation until it was dealt with—(Opposition cheers)—I had not intended to take any part in these debates. However, viewing the attitude taken up by the Prime Minister—an attitude which the House would never have tolerated from any one but the Prime Minister—(hear, hear)—hon. members on this side of the House, I think, ought to persevere and use all their rights, and refuse in the strongest possible manner to become partners in the servility of the Liberal party. (Opposition cheers.)

A vote of censure was moved by Sir Michael Hicks Beach,* on Monday, the 12th May, 1884. On the 13th, the last evening of the debate, Lord Randolph Churchill delivered the following speech, described by the *Pall Mall Gazette* as crushing, clear, and coherent.

Lord R. CHURCHILL (who was received with Opposition cheers): Her Majesty's Government are to be congratulated on having obtained the support of an Irish patriot. (Home Rule laughter.) I am afraid that in all probability it will not be a solid advantage, because at present the hon. gentleman is altogether out of harmony with the general body of his colleagues. (Laughter.) We know what Irish patriotism is worth when once it becomes incorporated into a Government majority. (Hear, hear.) When it stands alone, fighting for its own hand, unconnected with either party, it is often honest and sincere; but once incorporated into a Government majority it is nothing more than a beggar on the look-out for some substantial mark of favour and patronage. (Loud Irish cheers.) I make, with the greatest liberality, a present to her Majesty's Government of the Irish patriotism they have secured this afternoon, (Laughter.) The hon. member for Mayo boasted that he was the friend of freedom and humanity, and to justify his boast he proposes to vote against the present motion, which expresses

* For whose Life, see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 2.

regret that the greatest friend of freedom and humanity has not been supported effectually by the Government at all, and is now placed in a position of imminent peril. (Opposition cheers.) I must compliment him, by the way, on the tact he displayed in reminding the House and the Prime Minister of a demonstration that was made the other day on a public occasion—a demonstration which I do not suppose excited any sympathy in this House, and to which I am certain no other speaker would allude. (Hear.) The question raised by the motion is as clear and simple as any that has ever been presented to this House. The Prime Minister said last night that it was not a manly or a courageous motion, but I beg leave to doubt whether the Prime Minister or his colleagues are any judges on the subject of manliness or courage. (Laughter.) They are qualities in which the Government have proved themselves conspicuously deficient, and the absence of these qualities in the Government renders them incapable of detecting them in other people. (Renewed laughter.) I can conceive nothing whatever unmanly in the motion of my right hon. friend, but I could see a great deal of unmanliness and want of courage in the Prime Minister's speech. I wonder whether the Prime Minister recollects a certain debate which occurred in the year 1830, when the Duke of Wellington made a speech on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. When the noble duke sat down there was great buzzing and whispering all round, and colloquies, and an evident amount of consternation and agitation—so much so that the duke himself perceived it, and asked a friend near him the cause. The friend replied, "Your grace has announced the fall of your Government. That is all." Well, sir, if the Prime Minister had occupied the singularly advantageous position I occupy here—(laughter)—and had been able to discern the intense, eager expectation of his supporters when he rose to address the House, the deepening gloom which settled down upon them as he proceeded, and the blank dismay which overcame them when he closed his speech; and if he had been able to see what I saw—the buzzings, the whisperings, the colloquies in the lobby—and asked the noble lord the member for Flintshire* the reason, the noble lord, if he had been an able, an intelligent, and earnest noble lord—(laughter)—would have replied to the Prime Minister, "Sir, you have announced the fall of your Government. That's all." (Loud Opposition cheers.) What was the speech of the Prime Minister? It was an announcement in a most solemn manner, on the part of the Government of the final and definite abandonment of General Gordon.

* Lord Robert Grosvenor, for whose Life see "Biographies of Celebrities," No. 1.

(Opposition cheers.) The speech reminded me of the conduct of a Roman Governor more than 1800 years ago when he washed his hands in the face of the multitude. (A laugh.) The object of the mission of General Gordon was twofold. It was to rescue the faithful garrisons scattered in the Soudan, and restore freedom and tranquillity to tribes which had long been harassed and oppressed. The whole nation acquiesced in that mission, as I believe it acquiesced in the abandonment of the Soudan, although it felt the solemn and high duties which the abandonment imposed upon them. The very intensity of the interest excited by General Gordon s mission was the measure of the responsibility imposed upon the Government to do their part in assisting that gallant officer to carry it to a successful issue. (Hear.) The Government now say they have discharged that responsibility. I take leave to say they have not. (Opposition cheers.) The Government ought, at the outset of the mission, to have considerably increased their forces in Egypt, and moved British troops up the Nile. The first appearance of General Gordon in Upper Egypt prevented disturbance; and if it had been known that the British force in Egypt had been increased and troops moved up the Nile, the first effects of the mission, instead of being transient, would have been permanent. (Opposition cheers.) More than that, the season was exceptionally favourable for the movement of troops, and I assert that such a movement of troops would have been perfectly consistent with the pacific character of the mission. The conduct of the Government with respect to Suakin was to give material support to the efforts to restore order in the East of the Soudan; but why was material support withheld from Gordon? That was the first failure of the Government to recognise their responsibility to Gordon. Then they had another warning soon after he arrived at Khartoum. He made a frantic appeal to the Government to send Zebehr Pasha. I am not going to blame the Government for not acceding to the request. But last night the Prime Minister, curiously enough, told the House that he thought General Gordon was right in asking for Zebehr, and that he was disposed to go to any length to meet his request. But what an extraordinary reason the right hon. gentleman gave for not doing what he said was right! He said that he feared he might thereby be placed in a minority in the House. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. GLADSTONE: The noble lord has repeated inaccurately what I said. I did not say that I should have in any case sent Zebehr, but I said whereas the arguments for sending Zebehr might have been very nearly balanced, and in the minds of some might have preponderated, the one argument conclu-

sive against it was not that the Government would have been placed in a minority, but that the sending of Zebehr would have been stopped by a vote of the House.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: That is exactly the same thing. (Cheers.) If he had come down to the House and proposed to send Zebehr, and a vote of the House had been taken hostile to that motion, does the Prime Minister think that he could have retained office? (Loud Opposition cheers.) It would have been a vote of censure, so my contention is right. It is in accordance with a former case with reference to the Prime Minister, because I recollect quite well when he informed the House that he did not restore order in Ireland, although he ought to have done so, because he was not certain at that time whether he could retain a majority of the House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) I myself am glad the Government did not send Zebehr, but, looking at the circumstances of General Gordon's appeal, I wonder that their eyes were not open to the fact that the gallant officer found his position at Khartoum utterly untenable, and that his position was one of imminent peril. On Feb. 22, when the Government refused his request, the movement of troops might have been carried on without the slightest risk and General Gordon's safety been provided for. That is the second undeniable failure of the Government. Let me turn here for a moment to the Suakin expedition. The right hon. gentleman taunted the Opposition that they cheered the announcement of the Suakin expedition. But why did we cheer it? Not because we were in love with the dangers of the expedition, but because it occurred to us that the dangers were far outweighed by the advantages which must obviously result. However, when we found, to our disgust and dismay, that not one single object of the expedition had been attained, we lost no time in condemning it. (Hear, hear.) Let me compare the Government treatment of the question of Suakin with their treatment of General Gordon. Suakin is a dirty, plague-stricken, wretched port on the Red Sea, of no value to anyone except the Soudanese. General Gordon is, as has been said, a great personality, and the envoy of the Queen. More than that, his life is invaluable to the country, because nations do not turn out General Gordons by the dozen every day. (A laugh.) The Prime Minister worked himself up to a fury with the hon. baronet because he said that the Government ought to have given material support to General Gordon; but why not do for General Gordon what has been done for this wretched plague-stricken port on the Red Sea so lavishly and uselessly? (Cheers.) Comparing the treatment of Suakin and that of Gordon, the logic of facts is absolutely fatal to their position.

It occurred to me last night, when the Prime Minister was speaking, that there was a singularly inexplicable difference in the manner in which different persons appeal to the sympathies of the Prime Minister. I compared his speech in the case of General Gordon with his efforts in the cause of Mr. Bradlaugh, and I remembered the courage, the perseverance, the tenacity, and the amount of time of the House of Commons which were consumed by the Government in their desperate adherence to that man. (Cheers and laughter.) If a hundredth part of those moral qualities, of that invaluable modicum of time, which the Government bestowed on the cause of that seditious blasphemer —(cries of "Order" and Opposition cheers)—had been given to the support of a Christian hero, the success of General Gordon's mission would have been by this time assured. (Renewed cheers.) This, too, struck me as most remarkable when the Prime Minister sat down, that the finest speech he ever made in the House of Commons was delivered in support of a seditious blasphemer, and the worst——

Sir W. LAWSON: I rise to order. I wish to ask you, sir, whether a member of this House has a right to call a fellow-member a "seditious blasphemer"?

The SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. baronet, I may say that I do not think the term "seditious blasphemer" applied to a member of this House, proper or Parliamentary, and I feel sure the noble lord would wish to withdraw it.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: I withdraw the term. I meant it merely as a political criticism. (Laughter.) I was going to say that the finest speech the right hon. gentleman ever delivered in the House of Commons was in the case of this gentleman whom I am prohibited from characterising—(laughter)—and the worst he ever delivered, by common consent, in the case of the Christian hero. (Cheers.) The Prime Minister made a most extraordinary remark last night, which shows the incapacity of the present Government to deal with those difficult commissions abroad. He asked what would be the value of a few hundred British troops at Berber. Now for fifty years of his life the Prime Minister has been more or less conspicuously in the service of the Crown, and has been identified with many brilliant triumphs of the British arms, and after that long experience of British valour he gets up and asks the House, What is the value of a few hundred British soldiers? Sir, he must have been thinking, not of the earlier military glories with which he was connected, but rather with the calamities of Majuba Hill and Laing's Neck. (Hear, hear.) I think, myself, that the value of a few hundred British soldiers at Berber would have been everything. This march across the desert would have

produced a great effect, protected fugitives, confirmed waverers and undoubtedly saved the garrisons of Berber and prevented the imminent danger which now assails Dongola. I assert, most emphatically, that the duty of rescue still lies heavy upon you—to rescue all of the garrisons. It is the duty of England—the sacred duty of England—to support her envoy. The Prime Minister says that in October he will consider the question, but does he really think that England will wait patiently till then to hear what the Government are going to do? If so, I can only remark how low is the estimate the Prime Minister has of his countrymen who have so long worshipped him and put their trust in him. (Opposition cheers.) But if the Prime Minister imagines that the British people will wait until the middle of October, does he think the Mahdi will wait till October? (Opposition cheers.) Because, whatever may be the qualities of the British people, the Mahdi has developed certain qualities which enable us to calculate the rate of his advance; and does not the right hon. gentleman propose to take any steps to save the inhabitants of Lower Egypt from the encroachments of the Mahdi until the time when, as he says, climatic influences will not endanger the health and life of the troops? (Opposition cheers.) I cannot believe that this will be endorsed by the House of Commons, because, to my mind, so very little would be necessary to arrest the Mahdi. A slight movement of troops, a small equipment, a little more energy, a little more precision, a little more common-sense, a little more consistency in your foreign despatches, and the thing would be done. (Opposition cheers.) And now we are told that the Prime Minister is going to meet the Powers of Europe in Conference. He is going to meet them after this debate, if he survives it. (Opposition cheers.) He is going to meet the Powers of Europe in Conference on the Eastern question—Powers represented by standing armies numbering millions of men. I like conferences, and I advocate them on certain conditions. I will illustrate what I mean. Compare the position which Lord Beaconsfield occupied at the Congress at Berlin with the position which the Premier will occupy at the Conference which is about to take place. (Opposition cheers.) The one, by the mere movement of the fleet and the movement of troops, arrested the advance of the Russian army at the very gates of the goal to which, for a century, they had been tending. The other will appear as having been afraid—and he has stated his fears in the face of Europe—to arrest the advance of a barbarian, and of rescuing an English envoy. (Loud Opposition cheers.) I should like to know whether the Government appear on terms of equality with the other European Powers in

such a position as that—a Government that goes into Conference having done a dishonourable act. (Renewed Opposition cheers.) The Conference called together will not be so much in the nature of a coalition for the consideration of Egyptian affairs, where the Powers will meet on equality—it will be rather a tribunal called together to pronounce on the crimes of a delinquent and recreant nation. ("Oh, oh," and Opposition cheers.) The Prime Minister denounced the motion for a vote of censure, and said it was dictated not by love of country, but by a mere desire for office and the transfer of power. I have to ask the Prime Minister now to tell us, by way of satisfying intelligent curiosity, if ever he knew a vote of censure which had not for its object the transfer of power, and why, if that is the general character of votes of censure, this particular vote of censure which the right hon. baronet has proposed is so vile in his eyes? (Hear, hear.) He stated that the Opposition was unjust and ambitious. It is not for me to defend the Opposition from these adjectives—(ironical cheers from the Ministerialists) —but I should like to know from the right hon. gentleman or any of his colleagues whether, when the Premier commenced in 1877 the agitation which electrified the country, was he not ambitious, was he not unjust? (Opposition cheers.) Was he not open to these two adjectives when he publicly boasted—I think it was at Oxford—that for two or three years he had rested neither night nor day in order to thwart and arrest the policy of Lord Beaconsfield? (Opposition cheers.) And why should there not be a transfer of power? I have heard and read a great deal of the deplorable weakness of the Opposition. (Ministerial cheers.) I certainly detected no deplorable weakness in the speech of the right hon baronet last night. Nor, indeed, did I detect any deplorable weakness in the sonorous and resounding cheers which greeted that speech from beginning to end—a speech which, in my opinion—and I say it with all deference—was magnificent, and all the more magnificent because it was so measured and so grave. It must, I think, have called to the Prime Minister's mind the palmy days of Tory leadership. (Opposition cheers.) What means this transfer of power which the Prime Minister held out as being so mischievous and pernicious? It means, so far as I can make it out, the immediate and certain rescue of General Gordon as opposed to the autumnal and uncertain rescue of General Gordon. (Hear, hear.) It means the restoration of order in Egypt as opposed to a continuance of anarchy. (Cheers.) It means the expulsion of the Mahdi as opposed to a general Mohammedan rising. I believe it also means the taking over of Egypt under British protection—(cheers and counter-cheers)—extending the might

of Britain over that distracted land for a time and only for a time. That is what a transfer of power means in Egypt. What does it mean at home? Taking the different sections of this House, it means—to the Whigs a cessation of voting day after day that black is white—(Opposition cheers)—a Parliamentary dietary which even the tough and leathery political stomach of the hon. member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) is unable to digest any longer. (Laughter.) What does it mean for the Radical party? It means for them that, after four years' abandonment of every principle on which they came into power, they will at length be able to reconcile their principles with their votes. (Laughter and Opposition cheers.) But we are told that there must not be a transfer of power because the Radical party could not support anything that would delay Parliamentary reform. Well, but what is there to prevent the Radicals taking a just view of the relief of General Gordon? (Hear, hear.) Parliamentary reform is no longer a party question. ("Oh, oh," from the Ministerialists.) I cannot go into the whole treatment of the question by the Opposition. Whatever transfer of power takes place the whole question of Parliamentary reform must be dealt with on a more complete, on a more genuine and larger basis. (Cheers and counter cheers.) I do not know why there should be this demonstration. I simply state what is the policy which has been pursued by the Opposition. Do you fear, or do the Irish party fear, that the loss of the Reform Bill will militate against their power? I should think that the treatment given by the House as a whole to the motion of the hon. member for Mid-Lincoln (Mr. Chaplin) would dissipate any idle fear on that head. The object of a vote of censure is a transfer of power, and the sooner it comes the better it will be for the country. The Government, when it went to Egypt, abandoned every shred of principle they professed, and Egypt has been their Nemesis and probably will be their doom. (Opposition cheers.) The whole question of Egypt is at last, thank God, presented to us in an intelligible and simple form. It is, "Will you or will you not rescue General Gordon now?" Answer me "Ay" or answer me "No." The people of England, of Scotland, and, I believe, of Ireland say "Ay." (Dissent.) The Prime Minister and a few Radical fanatics below the gangway say "No." But great as is the Prime Minister's power, long as has been his career, dazzling and fascinating as is his eloquence, and undoubtedly glorious as is his name, the odds against him on this question are so overwhelming that even the Prime Minister must submit or resign. (Loud Opposition cheers.)

On May 20, 1884, the House of Commons, on Clause 2 of the Franchise Bill, resumed its consideration of Mr. Brodrick's Amendment to exclude Ireland from the operation of the measure. Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL opened the resumed debate as follows :—

It was not my intention of offer any remarks on this bill, further than I did on the first reading. I thought it was a little bill—I might almost call it a trumpery bill—(laughter)—certainly not in any way worthy to be designated a great Reform Bill. I therefore thought it might be allowed to pass through this House, and go up to the House of Lords, where no doubt it would receive the consideration which it merits. (Laughter.) But I regret that this question of Ireland has again been brought before the House. I did think that the matter had been very fully gone into by the Member for the University of Dublin on the first reading. I regret that this question has been brought up again, because I am obliged to differ from my right hon. friend the member for West Surrey, and shall have to vote against him—(Ministerial cheers)—which I can assure him is a matter to me of the greatest possible concern. (Laughter.) I have given as much anxious thought as I could to the subject, and I will frankly admit that my mind has undergone a change. (Ironical laughter from the Radical benches.) That change, I venture to think, has risen from a most legitimate source, namely, from the progress of the debate in the House. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) If it is to be supposed that debates in the House of Commons are, under no circumstances, to produce changes in the minds of hon. members, then I think we may as well adopt the Radical programme, and abolish debates altogether. (Renewed laughter and cheers.) I, like everybody else, was considerably startled when it was first mooted that the Reform Bill would be brought in for Ireland upon the same basis as for England ; and I imagine that even the Government felt great hesitation on the point, and did not arrive at their decision without proper consideration. There is no doubt that I was, in this respect, in exceedingly good company, because the noble lord the Secretary of State for War himself informed the country that he was startled at the proposal. (Hear, hear.) But as the debates have proceeded I have genuinely come to the conclusion, after balancing all the arguments—and there are many on each side—that on this sole question of Ireland, quite apart from the basis of the bill, to which my objections remain as strong as ever in its present form, the position which the Government have taken up is on the whole wise and statesman-like. (Ministerial cheers.) I should be sorry to see any strong party opposition to their proposals in this matter. I cannot

forget that the state of Ireland has very much altered in the last two years. (Cheers.) A remarkable decrease of disorder has taken place, and that appears to be still going on. Moreover, we on this side of the House may recognise with satisfaction the great change that has come over her Majesty's Government in respect to Ireland. We may feel some confidence that they have learned a lesson from the events of 1881 and 1882, and that they recognise more fully what are the real duties of an English Government towards the Irish people. It may also be said that the land agitation is dying out, and that the farmers are disposed to abandon, at any rate for a time, those paths of violence with which the House is only too familiar. (Hear, hear.) Under the circumstances it appears to me to be what has been called the "psychological moment" for England to hold out to Ireland the generous hand of fellowship and to sow the seeds of conciliation. (Ministerial cheers.) I do not know that there is any better seed of conciliation that we can sow than that of complete political equality. (Renewed Ministerial cheers.) What does this bill propose to do? As regards Ireland its chief feature is to confer the Parliamentary franchise on the peasantry. On the whole I acknowledge that I do not fear the effect of that enfranchisement. I hold that the treasonable aspirations, especially of Fenianism and its analogous societies have their home in the Irish towns, and I do not think that they have taken much root amongst the country population. The incidents of agricultural life are not at all favourable to revolutionary movements, and the peasantry is much more under the proper and legitimate influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood than the lower classes in the towns. At any rate, on the subject of these treasonable societies, for a long time past the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church has been one which must be most satisfactory to the Home Government. No one could have set his face more strongly against those movements than the late Cardinal Cullen, and the course which he adopted appears to have been followed by Cardinal M'Cabe. That being so, I believe that a strong influx of the country element will altogether overwhelm and counterbalance the town populations, and will be to an immense extent a guarantee against any danger which we might fairly expect from an extension of the franchise. I think, too, that the effect of this extension would be favourable to the landlord interest. It is quite clear that in the state of Ireland the interests of the farmers and of the labourers are essentially diverse, and from that diversity will arise a strong class difference which we may look upon as a guarantee of safety to the state at large. We have heard a great deal of the mud cabin argument. (Hear,

hear.) That we owe to the brilliant, the ingenious, and the fertile mind of the right hon. gentleman the Member for Westminster.* (Laughter and cheers.) I suppose that to the mind of a lord of suburban villas, or of an owner of pineries and vineries, a mud cabin represents the climax of physical and mental degradation. (Laughter.) But the franchise has never been determined by Parliament with respect to the character of dwellings. (Hear, hear.) I should like to say this, that the difference between the mud cabin of an Irish peasant and the cottage of an English labourer is not nearly so great as the difference between the palaces which are the abode of the right hon. member for Westminster and the lowly dwelling which shelters from the storm and tempest the humble individual who now addresses the House. (Loud laughter and cheers.) I can truly say—

> "Non ebur, neque aureum
> Meâ renidet in domo lacunar;
> Non trabes Hymettiæ
> Premunt columnas ultimâ recisas
> Africâ."

(Renewed laughter.) If, on such a distinction as this, the right hon. gentleman were to propose that he should have a vote for parliamentary elections and that I should have none, I feel sure that the House of Commons would repudiate the suggestions with indignation. (Ministerial cheers and laughter.) On these general grounds I dispose of the mud cabin argument. The House will also recollect that the fact of a man living in a mud cabin in Ireland is not the slightest proof that he is incapable of exercising the franchise. Very often he is a man possessing a small holding, in decently good times he has money in the savings bank, and I should be prepared to contend that intellectually he is often more suited to take an interest in and to form a sound view upon public questions than the English agricultural labourer. (Hear, hear.) We are told that the Protestant minority will be overwhelmed. (Opposition cheers.) That is a serious argument, and one which, if well founded, ought to be carefully considered. But I do not see why the Protestant minority should be placed in a worse position by this bill than it occupies at the present moment. Outside Ulster what is called the Protestant minority has no political power, except in so far as it is represented in the House of Peers. Generally speaking, the whole of the representation of Ireland, with the exception of Ulster, Dublin University, Dublin County, the borough of Portarlington, and what I may call the happy

* The Right Hon. W. H. Smith, for whose Life see "Biographies of Celebrities," No 2.

accident of Leitrim—(laughter)—is in the hands of the Catholic party. (Hear, hear.) After balancing all the arguments for and against the inclusion of Ireland, I have arrived at the conviction that we may with safety agree with the Government in this respect. (Ministerial cheers.) Honourable gentlemen who belong to the Tory party may recollect that equality of political rights in Ireland and England was a principle recognised at the time of the Union and in the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867. At those periods the state of Ireland was much more disordered. Under all the circumstances I may appeal to hon. members on this side of the House not to identify themselves as a party with the amendment which my hon. friend has moved. (Ministerial cheers.) They have constituted themselves the defenders of a great, a far-spreading, and a wide-reaching cause—the preservation of our institutions at home, the promotion of a vigorous policy abroad—(ironical Ministerial cheers)—and the furtherance of Imperial rule and unity in our colonies and dependencies. If their cause is so great, why should they on a question of detail—("Oh," and laughter)—yes, comparatively speaking, it is a matter of detail, and unimportant detail—why should they alienate inevitably and irretrievably from that cause immense numbers of the Queen's subjects—(laughter and cheers)—subjects both in Ireland and Great Britain, whom by a wiser policy and happier methods they might allure to their standard and to their ranks? (Ministerial cheers.) I would appeal to my hon. friend the member for West Surrey, who by his constant display of the highest intelligence and ability has, I think, shown that he belongs to the more generous and advanced school of political thought which has emancipated itself from the traditions of an antiquated party—(laughter and Ministerial cheers)—to seek to base the real strength of the Tory party on the genuine and spontaneous affections of the people—I would appeal to him whether he would not now decline to press his amendment to a division. It is, I think, reactionary. (Ministerial cheers.) It is an amendment which is calculated to throw a slur and a stigma upon a country with which he is closely and honourably connected. It may have the effect of unnecessarily placing the Tory party in pronounced opposition to the legitimate desires of an overwhelming majority of the Irish people. To my mind, it will have the invidious effect of placing many who admire the traditions which my hon. friend defends, and who agree with him on almost all political points, under the painful and disagreeable necessity either of leaving the House or of going into the opposite lobby. (Ministerial cheers.)

WILLIAM RIDER AND SON, PRINTERS, LONDON.

On the 18th June, 1884, Lord R. CHURCHILL addressed a public meeting at Aylesbury, where he inveighed against the Governmental policy in Egyptian matters, and arrived at the conclusion that Egypt was really annexed to England and that the work must be completed by England alone.

Egypt for the Egyptians must be your motto and your aim (he said); but it does not mean Egypt for the Turks, neither does it mean Egypt for the French or the bond-holders under the name of an international control. Egypt for the Egyptians, paradoxical as it may seem, can only be maintained by a prolonged British occupation, acquiesced in by Europe at large, and provided for by a firm and unquestioned British administration.

ILLNESS IN JUNE-JULY, 1884.

On the 2nd July, 1884, a great meeting of Conservatives of the Midland counties, to have been held at Birmingham, was deferred on account of the hot weather having co-operated with Lord R. Churchill's unceasing attendance at the House to thoroughly indispose him for the time.

On the Rejection of the Franchise Bill, 10th July, 1884, in the House, densely crowded, Mr. Gladstone made the promised statement on the "remarkable occurrence" of the failure of the Franchise Bill. The Government had determined to sacrifice the principal measures so as to secure the passage of the Bill, and keep the engagements as to redistribution for the next session. Sir S. Northcote (now Earl of Iddesleigh) moved the adjournment.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: No one would suppose from the tone of the Prime Minister that—as we might think from what we read in the newspapers—we were entering upon a grave Constitutional crisis. (Cheers and laughter.) Anything more meek and mild than the attitude of the Prime Minister—anything more meek and mild than the attitude of the Liberal party in this matter it has certainly never been my good fortune to witness. (Cheers and counter cheers.) The statement that has just been made by the Prime Minister is to my mind, as I think it will be to the minds of many in the country, the complete and utter exposure of the policy of the Government and the most complete and unlooked-for defence of the House of Lords that it would have been possible for the mind of man to have offered. (Cheers.) What has the Prime Minister told us is to be the plan of the Government? He tells us that the House is to meet in the autumn in order that we may deal with the Franchise Bill, and that the Government may redeem its

pledges with regard to redistribution. (Cheers and cries of "No.") That is the statement of the Prime Minister absolutely. ("No, no.") Those hon. members who contradict me upon that point will look very foolish to-morrow morning when they read the reports of the right hon. gentleman's speech in the newspapers. The Prime Minister said, "We will call Parliament together in the autumn in order that we may deal with the franchise and redeem our pledges about redistribution." ("Hear, hear," and cries of "No.")

Mr. GLADSTONE: I may perhaps be excused if I set the noble lord right. It is quite possible I may have used the expression "dealing with redistribution next session," but it was perfectly understood that I did not mean the autumn session. (Cheers.)

Lord R. CHURCHILL: I do not follow the right hon. gentleman in what he says. No doubt he stated the matter in that extremely confused way to the House, and if I had not remarked upon it, my understanding of what the right hon gentleman said would have been in the minds of everybody (cheers and cries of "No,") except, perhaps, of the members of the Liberal party who have been taken into the Prime Minister's confidence this afternoon. (Hear, hear.) It could have occurred to no other human mind who heard the statement of the Prime Minister that the Government had any other intention than to call Parliament together in the autumn to deal with the Franchise Bill and to redeem their pledges with regard to redistribution. (Hear, hear.) But if Parliament is to be called together in the autumn merely to deal only with the Franchise Bill, what a monstrous, and I say criminal and dissolute, waste of public time it will be. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) I cannot, of course, hope hon. members opposite will agree with me on this subject, but there are others out of doors who will be inclined to take a more impartial view of the question. (Hear, hear.) What is the position of the Franchise Bill? It is one of suspended animation. (Cheers.) It is perfectly open to the other House of Parliament to proceed with that Bill to-morrow or at any time before Parliament is prorogued. The Prime Minister has only got to get up in this House and to follow the course that was pursued in 1882 to adjourn Parliament until October and then to introduce his Redistribution Bill. (Cheers, and cries of "Oh.") The result of such a proceeding would be that the whole question of Parliamentary reform would be dealt with before the close of this year, and the Prime Minister could take an election under the new constituencies before Christmas, 1884. (Cheers.) What can be the reason why the Government do not take that plain and simple course? From what

we have witnessed to-night of this wholesale massacre of measures such as no one in this House has ever before had any experience of, it is perfectly obvious to me that the whole legislative programme of the Government which was set forth with so much pomp in the Queen's Speech was nothing but a gigantic humbug, a stupendous imposture, and a prodigious fraud (cheers and laughter), and was put forward for no other purpose than to delude Parliament and the country, and to serve for the concealment of a revolutionary attack upon the House of Lords. (Cheers.) I ask the House to observe the extraordinary amiability of the Prime Minister upon the present occasion, and at the same time to carry their minds back to a certain Friday night about three weeks ago, when the Prime Minister moved the third reading of the Franchise Bill. On that occasion the Prime Minister warned the House of Lords to

> "Beware
> Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
> Bear 't that th' opposed may beware of thee."

But having given this warning, the Prime Minister immediately proceeded to set it at nought, and having entered into a quarrel, so far from his opponents having to beware of him, they merely laughed at him. (Cheers and laughter.) The position of the Prime Minister was a humiliating one. Having thrown down that challenge and the House of Lords having taken it up, the Prime Minister runs away. Then I say, if the Government are going to take up this extremely prudent, not to say pusillanimous line, the speech which the Prime Minister delivered on the third reading of the Reform Bill was utterly out of place. It can only be called a piece of Falstaffian braggadocio, because this much must be said, that a person who threatens nearly always discloses that he has a weak case. Anxious as I admit I was that there should not be this division of opinion between the Lords and the Commons, still every hope I had of averting that was shattered, and the hopes of many others were shattered too, when we heard that speech of the Prime Minister. (Cheers.) And this I will deliberately say, so that the public may know it, even if hon. gentlemen opposite do not like to hear it, that from my own knowledge of what was the opinion of noble lords belonging to the Conservative party in the other House, many of them before the third reading of the Reform Bill, impressed by the attitude which the Prime Minister had adopted, impressed by the line which had been taken on this front bench, impressed by the statement of the noble lord the member for Middlesex that the Bill as it stood was in many respects a Conservative Bill, were prepared to approach the consideration of the Bill

with open, unprejudiced, and impartial minds. ("Oh, oh," from the Ministerial side.) I make that statement deliberately because I know it of my own knowledge, and if the Prime Minister on the third reading had addressed this House and indirectly the House of Lords in the tone and manner which he has so carefully made use of to-night, that Bill would have been well on its way, in my sincere and earnest judgment, towards receiving the Royal assent. (Murmurs on the Ministerial side.) Now, just let me notice the statement made by the President of the Local Government Board in a very wild speech which he delivered last night. The President stated that I had said that if a date was inserted into the Bill the House of Lords would not dare to reject it. Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity of qualifying that statement as the most monstrous misstatement which I think was ever made even by the right hon. gentleman (laughter), and of giving to that statement the flattest and the most direct contradiction which you in your capacity of presiding over these debates may think Parliamentary. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) I never said anything of the kind, and I altogether deny the right of a responsible Minister of the Crown—I would deny the right even of an ordinary member of Parliament—to go and traduce an opponent (laughter from the Ministerial benches) in a place where that opponent cannot answer him (hear, hear); because I say it is traducing an opponent to put into his mouth a sentence which he never uttered, and moreover a sentence which I venture to say—and this it is which makes it so annoying to me—was the most imbecile and stupid sentence which could possibly have been uttered by a member of Parliament. I never said anything of the kind, and I challenge the right hon. gentleman to get up at that table and quote any expression which by the wildest exercise of his most romantic and romancing imagination can be twisted into such a meaning as he stated last night; and if he cannot, I call upon him to retract what he said, and to express his regret (laughter on the Ministerial side) for having misquoted—I will not say wilfully misquoted—an opponent. (Hear, hear.) As the matter stands at the present moment the constitutional crisis is evidently not in this House. The Liberal party are evidently not prepared for a constitutional crisis. (Cheers.) I know that there is at the present moment a silly person of the name of Schnadhorst who is meeting somewhere with his myrmidons in the back slums of Westminster in order to devise and concert measures for supporting their great master and their great friend. (Laughter.) But I do not think they will be encouraged by the tone of the Prime Minister this afternoon. Nothing could

be more discouraging, I imagine, to those faithful myrmidons, for, instead of indulging in denunciations of the House of Lords for daring to thwart him, the Prime Minister did not venture even to name the House of Lords for fear of incurring a debate in this House. (Cheers.) I know that there are hon. gentlemen—particularly the member for Newcastle and the member for Ipswich—and right hon. gentlemen—and very likely I see two of them sitting there together (a laugh)—who are very fond of getting up in this House and careering about the country and calling themselves the people of England (cheers and laughter), threatening with the direst vengeance all or any who may hinder them in their way. Well, I do not know whether, Mr. Speaker, you recollect a collection of fables which has been handed down to us from the earliest times under the name of Æsop, and with which hon. gentlemen opposite, with their vast stores of practical knowledge, are no doubt familiar. But there is one of those fables, the most delightful and instructive of them all, which relates how a donkey in the course of his morning peregrinations came across a lion's skin, and it immediately occurred to his asinine mind ("Question") that if he were to clothe himself in the lion's skin, great power and dignity and profit would immediately accrue to him. So he put it on and he careered about the country (cheers and laughter), and he frightened a great many old women and children, but, unfortunately for himself, he came across a party of men in the neighbourhood of a town who were well acquainted with the elementary facts of natural history, and who quickly detected the disguise, with the result that the unfortunate donkey was soundly beaten and cuffed and kicked. (Renewed laughter.) The history does not tell us whether the donkey learnt wisdom, or whether having been a donkey once he remained a donkey. But this I will say, that whenever I see hon. gentlemen opposite, and right hon. gentlemen getting up in this House and careering about the country, and calling themselves the people of England, I think of the lion's skin. I remember Æsop's fable, and I desire to remind the First Lord of the Treasury of what no one can know better than himself, that there is nothing more easy than to detect the difference between the demagogue's bray and the people's roar. (Loud cheers.)

SPEECH AT THE MANCHESTER CONSERVATIVE DEMONSTRATION.

The counter-demonstration of the Conservatives to the great Liberal meeting at Manchester a fortnight before took place on August 8th, 1884, in the Pomona gardens in that city. The audiences were of similar dimensions as a whole. The meeting was "to protest against the dictation of the Caucus, and to support the demand of the House of Lords for a complete Reform Bill." A very warm reception was given both to Lord Salisbury and to Lord Randolph Churchill—the principal speakers.

Sir R. Cross, having taken the chair at the Palace meeting, opened the proceedings, at which speeches were delivered by Lord Salisbury, Mr. Chaplin, M.P., Sir M. Hicks-Beach, and Lord R. CHURCHILL, who said, after a most enthusiastic greeting: I have never seen, gentlemen, such a colossal demonstration, and though I have been in Manchester before, and have been kindly received, I have never received anywhere a more cordial greeting. (Great cheers.) I will not take up your time ("Go on"), except with a very few words indeed. Gentlemen, the Radical party, with Mr. Gladstone at its head (hissing and hooting), is outraged and indignant with the Tories because we have adopted as our party cry "Appeal to the people." (Cheers.) The Radicals say that anything more monstrous, more unconstitutional, cannot be imagined. (Hear, hear.) Well, I do not think we need trouble ourselves very much about the Radical party (hear hear), for the very good reason that our policy of appeal to the people is being actively carried out, and by no one more strenuously than by the Liberals themselves. (Hear, hear.) The people are now being appealed to by both parties, and the only difference between the appeal to the people advocated by the Tories and the appeal to the people carried out by the Liberals, is that we, the Tories, desire that the appeal to the people shall be terminated and justified by the votes of the people; and the Liberals are determined that the votes of the people are just the very last things in the world which they will tolerate at the present moment. (Cheers.) "Wait a little," said Mr. John Morley (hisses); "at the proper time we will allow the people to vote." Schnadhorst is not yet quite ready, his preparations are not complete, the tissue of fabrication and falsification which we are weaving has not yet had time to cover the country. Ireland, Egypt, South Africa are too fresh and vivid in the memory of the nation. (Cheers.) Mr. John Morley,

like Felix, the Roman Governor, when being preached to about judgment to come, feebly and stammeringly exclaims—"Yes! perhaps! very likely! but at a more convenient season." (Laughter and cheers.) Well, now, I am perfectly certain of this—that the Tory party will get their way (cheers), and that the appeal to the people which is now going on will produce, and produce very soon, indeed, a general election. If Mr. John Morley and his friends imagine that they can rouse this great popular emotion, that they can go careering about the country summoning the people to attend mass meetings in their thousands, that they can loudly and solemnly call upon the people to judge between them and their opponents, and having done all this, can for any appreciable length of time prevent them going into the polling booth and deciding upon what they have seen and heard, they imagine a vain and foolish conceit. (Laughter and cheers.) The people are being summoned by both parties to come together and give judgment, and Mr. John Morley and his friends cannot any more avert or delay that decision than the convicted criminal in the dock can delay the sentence of the judge. (Cheers.) Well, now, gentlemen, Lord Hartington, who was here the other day (hooting), asked the men of Lancashire to remember 1832, and to remember 1866. But I declare there is no analogy between those times and the present. Do you think that in 1832 we could have seen things as they are now? What is the great feature of the changed times which have come over us since 1832, and the changed parties which have accompanied these times? Why the great feature is the growth of the Tory party in our large northern cities; an active party, relying confidently and with right and justice upon popular support, who, instead of being afraid of the people, or neglectful of them, seek them out, argue with them, and lay their case and policy before them. Do you think if we had been the party which we were in 1832 we could have gathered together such an enormous meeting—this crushing refutation of Radical slanders? And not only here, but in all our other large towns—the Tory Party can hold and will hold similar meetings to this; and the reason of it is, that experience has shown that the Tory party, as at the commencement of the eighteenth century, so at the end of the nineteenth century, is the party of the people—the party which protects popular freedom, which defends and enlarges popular rights, which neither grinds, nor drives, nor tyrannizes over the people (cheers), but which seeks ever a fair and full and free expression of the nation's will; and it is because we have truth upon our lips, honesty in our hearts, and patriotism and love of the great empire of the Queen overruling and guiding all our acts, that

we are able, without fear and without shame, to meet the men of Lancashire assembled in their thousands to-day.

The resolutions were then put and carried almost unanimously with great cheering, while Lord R. Churchill thence proceeded to the overflow meeting in the great Agricultural Hall, where he was again received with most enthusiastic cheering. He said: I congratulate you upon your marvellous demonstration of to-day. I consider it a very high honour to have been allowed to take part in this great demonstration, and a still greater honour to have been called upon to address this meeting. I am told that Radical orators go about the country and declaim about Tory disunion. Well, let them, if it amuses them. (Cheers.) We know that Tory disunion is a phantom and a fiction, the ridiculous creation of a disordered and dissipated Radical imagination. (Laughter.) But what may we not say of disunion in the Liberal camp after the late painful disclosures? Here you see two great Liberal leaders (the Premier and Lord Hartington), declaring that they will be no party to the cry taken up of abolishing the House of Lords, and here you see the swarm of Radical followers crying out that the abolition of the House of Lords is the only thing they care about; that the Franchise Bill is to them a stalking horse, which they cannot be troubled with any longer when the abolition of the House of Lords seems to be within their grasp. (Cheers.) The fact is Radicals and Liberals do not know their own minds, they do not know exactly what they want. (Cheers and laughter.) On this question the great Liberal party is without any definite policy. (Loud cheers.) Well, gentlemen, I know it is very hot. (Cries of "Go on.") If I am not wearying you too much ("No, no" and cheers) just let me ask you to cast your eyes for a few moments to our own country. In 1882 Mr. Gladstone informed Parliament that his domestic legislation had been a total failure, not because of the Tory party, but because of the defective and rotten procedure of the House of Commons. Well, in 1882, he spent some time in reforming the procedure, and at last he got it quite to his mind; but now, strange to say, he never loses the opportunity of declaring that his reform procedure, *clôture* and all, has been a total failure (hear, hear), and that the whole work will have to be done over again by a new Parliament. (Hear, hear.) Lord Hartington, in this place a fortnight ago, solemnly declared that the domestic legislation of the Government had been a total failure, not because of the House of Lords (hear, hear)—he fully acquitted them of all responsibility (hear, hear)—but on account of the incompetence of the House of Commons. These were his very words—the incompetence of the House of

Commons. That is what we have been saying for four years. It was an incompetent House of Commons that rejected the Manchester Ship Canal (prolonged cheers), and it is because of the incompetence of the House of Commons that we demand an appeal to the people in order that we may have a new House of Commons. Well, now, gentlemen, this is very remarkable—that for all these total failures which I have described to you, Her Majesty's Government never think of blaming themselves. And now, gentlemen, these silly and abandoned individuals calling themselves ministers (laughter) imagine that by the production of this measure for the better representation of the people, which, instead of improving the representation of the people, would only fatally unrepresent the people, and only improve the representation of the Radical party (hear, hear)—they imagine that by this imbecile device they can blind the eyes of their countrymen to the shocking record of legislative, administrative, and executive incapacity which I have placed before you. Well, gentlemen, if that is so, if these are the facts which you ought to bear in your minds before deciding under the great appeal to the people which is now going on, does not, I ask you in all confidence, the conduct of the House of Lords in respect to the Reform Bill begin to wear a very different aspect? The assertion that the House of Lords has no confidence in the people is demolished by the records of the Lords' journals that the House of Lords is in favour of an extension of the franchise. The loud assertion that the House of Lords is afraid of an improved representation is demolished by the courageous efforts of the Peers to make that improved representation immediate and certain rather than distant and doubtful. The assertion that the House of Lords recoils before the voice of the people is demolished by the challenge of the Lords to Mr. Gladstone to let that great voice be heard at the polling booths. (Cheers.) Those assertions are false from beginning to end, and to refute them I will make one assertion which shall be as true as they are false. There is a set of persons, gentlemen, in whom the House of Lords has no confidence. These persons are not the people of England, they are the Ministers of the Crown (loud cheers); and I believe that the want of confidence in Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues and in his policy expressed and acted on by the House of Lords has placed the Upper Chamber in more entire harmony with their fellow-countrymen than they have ever been at any period of their existence. (Loud cheers.) I will admit that it is quite true that I, a feeble, humble member of the Tory party, knowing, as I know, the

inveterate, the innate capacity of the Liberal party for the falsification of political truth—it is quite true that for a moment I felt anxious for the result of the conflict which the courage of the House of Lords has provoked. But seeing what I have seen to-day, and hearing what I have heard elsewhere, I now feel confident and sure that the British nation, having to decide between the House of Lords and its long centuries' of great tradition on the one hand, and the faults and the follies and the failures of Mr. Gladstone's four years' government on the other, which they will abolish and which they will preserve, will, by their wisdom, by their knowledge, and by higher than earthly guidance, award the palm and the honour and the victory to those who, conscious of the immeasurable responsibilities attaching to an hereditary House, have dauntlessly defended against an arbitrary Minister the ancient liberties of our race. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

A meeting of the Conservative party of Carlisle and the surrounding district was held in the Congress-hall, Carlisle, on the night of the 8th Oct., 1884, "In support of the action of the House of Lords on the Franchise Bill," and to hear the following political address from Lord R. CHURCHILL:

To-night I will, with your permission, address myself to the great question of the extension of the franchise. (Hear, hear.) At any rate, I will commence by making one remark in which even my opponents will agree with me, and, that is, that Saturday last was a most remarkable day; indeed, I may say a great day for England (hear, hear), because on that day was demonstrated in an effectual manner the healthy and the vigorous interest which our people take in their political progress and condition. (Hear, hear.) I suppose I shall not be accused of exaggeration when I say that about a quarter of a million of people of one kind and another, of all classes, on that day gathered together in various parts of the country to consider political questions; and even if we want to be perfectly fair, and divide those numbers equally between the Conservatives and the Liberals, I still maintain there was a great superiority in the Conservative meetings on account of the wider range of view which they took. (Hear, hear.) At the Conservative meetings the position of our country at home or abroad was discussed and considered. At the Liberal meetings they merely confined their consideration to the position of Her Majesty's Government on one small question connected with the Franchise Bill, which Lord Hartington now assures us is only a question

of procedure. (Cheers.) The chief meetings of Saturday last were those which were held at Leeds and at Rawtenstall, in North-east Lancashire. Well, at Leeds the House of Lords was denounced, defied, and threatened with summary abolition. But I do not think, for once in a way, that we need pay any very great attention to the speeches which were made at Leeds on Saturday (cheers), because at the very moment that those speeches were being made Lord Hartington was engaged in the performance which I believe is known in even the highest circles of this land as "chucking up the sponge." (Cheers.) I am very much afraid that *The Times* will be vexed and annoyed with me for using such an expression as that, because *The Times* is a great purist and very prudish about the English language, and objects to what it calls homely vernacular. (Laughter.) But I regret to say that, with limited knowledge of the English vocabulary, I know no other expression which so accurately describes Lord Hartington's speech. (Cheers.) Lord Hartington's speech, which I read with the greatest possible attention, was the most complete and ample justification of the action of the House of Lords which the most ardent Tory could desire or even dream of. (Cheers.) I think I can explain to you this somewhat abrupt surrender by the Liberal party of their untenable position. (Hear, hear.) The Liberal party has discovered that the House of Lords were not the least alarmed by any of the antics or pranks they played ; they discovered that the House of Lords meant to stand perfectly firm, and they knew that if the House stood firm nothing could prevent an almost immediate dissolution, and they shrewdly calculated the results of that dissolution, and they also knew that if they surrendered and came down from their untenable position and brought in their Redistribution Bill, they would secure to themselves at the least one more year's tenure of office, and the Liberals, who are nothing if they are not worldly wise, came to the conclusion that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, and that anything was preferable to immediately going to the constituencies (hear, hear) ; and therefore Lord Hartington was sent down into Lancashire to pronounce the word surrender, and certainly we can say, "All's well that ends well." I imagine that the course of events which is to come will be something of this kind :—The Franchise Bill will be reintroduced when Parliament meets and sent up to the House of Lords. A Redistribution Bill will be introduced, and if it is found to be a fair measure, as Lord Hartington says, founded on fair principles, securing fair representation to all, whether in town or country, that Bill will be passed and sent up to the House of Lords, and the entire question of Parliamentary

reform—the whole Reform Bill, whether in one or whether in two parts, will receive the Royal Assent some time next year. In that case, gentlemen, you will have a dissolution of Parliament in the autumn or early in the following winter of 1885—as soon, in fact, as the registration arrangements can be completed. But if, on the other hand, the redistribution scheme of the Government is obviously unfair; if it is obviously unsound; if it is merely what Lord Hartington seems to suggest, in adherence to the lines of 1832; if it is merely a piece of party patchwork, I anticipate the House of Lords will reject the Franchise Bill, and then nothing in the world can save the Government from immediate dissolution. In either case, I think the Conservative party may take heart and cheer up, whether the election takes place in January before the old constituencies complicated by this question of reform, or whether it takes place in the autumn or winter of 1885, before the enlarged and redistributed electorate. Surely, gentlemen, I say, the nation will turn from men such as these; from these clouds without water, blown about by the wind; these wandering stars—surely they will turn to the united and historic party who have in the past and so in the future can only alone re-establish your social and imperial interests, and can alone proceed safely, steadily, and surely along the broad path of social progress and reform.

THE BIRMINGHAM SPEECHES AND RIOT, OCT., 1884.

At the first of a series of gatherings, organized locally, in support of Conservative action in reference to the Franchise Bill, in Birmingham, disorderly antagonism was manifested. A mob collected outside the Aston grounds, broke down the wall and invaded the place, disturbing as well the main meeting in the large hall as those in the open. The speakers, driven to the hotel adjoining, addressed their defenders there. Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said:—

I feel very sorry for the Radical party in Birmingham. I feel a deep and intense pity for them, because they have succeeded by their manœuvres to-night in bringing what I feel sure will be regarded as a great stigma and a slur upon the great city of which they profess to be citizens, because they have to-night, by the disturbance and noise which they organized beforehand, succeeded in refusing a hearing of public affairs which concern the most vital interests of the nation, in refusing a hearing to a statesman (Sir Stafford Northcote) by far the wisest and most experienced that England possesses.

I am confident of this—that there is not another town in England where such a thing could have occurred; in not another town in England, I am convinced, though Sir Stafford Northcote has been north, south, east, and west, has he failed to obtain a most attentive hearing even from those who have disagreed with him. But it is no loss to Sir Stafford Northcote. (Cheers.) Sir Stafford Northcote can make his opinions heard and can put forward his views in various ways, and wherever he puts them forward they will command the most respectful attention. The loss, the misfortune, is that of the Radical party. These are the people who lose by the proceedings of to-night, and I will say this—that I do not feel much pity for them. I am not disposed to cast so much reproach upon the Liberal party as I am upon the leaders of the Radical party. It is to Mr. Chamberlain that we owe the scandalous proceedings of to-night (cheers and groans), proceedings which may have been pardonable enough when he was a private individual, but now that he is a Cabinet Minister, I say they are disgraceful and scandalous to the last degree. That is the idea which Mr. Chamberlain and his myrmidons, Schnadhorst and Nuttall, have of English fair play—to put down their opponents by sheer noise and force, and also to resort to any conceivable dodge to prevent them putting their views before the public. Let it go forth to-night that we, the Conservative party of Birmingham, numbering at least one-half of the population of Birmingham, are prevented from holding a great meeting in the Town-hall to-morrow solely by the arts of Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain looks upon the Town-hall of Birmingham as private property (laughter), just as much as he does that great red-brick house which he occupies outside the town; and instead of the great Town-hall of Birmingham being the property of the people, to be used freely by the citizens for all public purposes, it is in the hands of Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Schnadhorst, who take very great care that at least half the population of Birmingham shall be excluded from it. You will see this Town-hall, which might have been filled with the Conservative party, empty and without a light in its windows. Those are the kind of proceedings which we have to fight against in Birmingham; but we are not afraid. You know that Mr. Gladstone has said that there is nothing he wishes to hear so much as the spontaneous voice of the people; and you may depend upon it that Mr. Chamberlain will inform him that the 5,000 or so of Radicals who prevented 25,000 or so Conservatives from gaining a hearing to-night represent the spontaneous expression of the public opinion of Birmingham, and no doubt the *Birmingham Daily Post* to-morrow will have a flaming

article upon the independence and upon the courage and the nobility and the chivalry of the Liberal party. (Groans and laughter.) I will not detain you any further this evening (cries of "Go on"), because we have been considerably exercised in passing backwards and forwards across these spacious grounds, and going through a great variety of gymnastic jumps over benches and chairs and tables and human beings. (Laughter.) That is not a kind of preparation which is favourable to addressing an audience seriously upon public affairs. I am thankful to say that during the week which has just begun I shall have plenty of opportunities of meeting my Birmingham friends, and I shall be able by their indulgence to deal at considerable length with many questions of interest at the present moment; but we will take this opportunity of saying to-night that although, by the arts of a gang and clique, we have been prevented from demonstrating as effectively as we could have wished the true voice of Birmingham, yet that five and twenty thousand Conservative voters of Birmingham are not going to submit to Mr. Schnadhorst or Mr. Nuttall. They will be heard; and if they are not heard in the Aston-hall, they will be heard at the polling booths at the general election. (Cheers.)

On the same evening (that of Monday, the 13th Oct., 1884) there was an impromptu indignation meeting at the Birmingham Conservative Club, Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL in the chair.

His Lordship said: I cannot but characterise as an act of insanity and folly the proceedings of the Radical party at Aston to-night. (Cheers.) Still, I think one effect of their tactics will be to bring over to the Conservative party a number of moderate men of the Liberal party. I would suggest, as President of this club, that the members should consider the manner in which to defend themselves from a repetition of these proceedings. The result of these proceedings has been practically to lay waste the whole of the Aston Lower Grounds, and it is a scandal and disgrace to the town of Birmingham. (A voice—"Shame," and "Where were the police?") I do not think the Conservative party ought to look to the police for assistance. (Hear, hear.) We are quite capable of taking care of ourselves. (Hear, hear.) I would suggest to you the advisability—for two parties can play at the game which the Liberals have started—of defending yourselves. I myself have never been accustomed to, if I could possibly help it, allow myself to be put down by force, and that feeling I am sure animates you ten thousand times more than myself. (Cheers.) No doubt the Liberals will hold meetings in Birmingham shortly. Possibly Mr. Bright or Mr. Chamberlain may come down to address you, or perhaps Mr. Jesse Collings (groans) and people

of that kind. (Laughter.) It appears to me that when the Radical party in Birmingham refuse to allow a hearing to so highly respected and influential a statesman as Sir Stafford Northcote, the members of this club may refuse to accord a hearing to Liberal leaders. You have immense influence, you are the energy and the life of the party in Birmingham. You are the young guard of the Tory party of the town, and it is in your power to collect and organise a body which, by careful and assiduous attention at Liberal meetings, will so conduct themselves (laughter) that the Liberals at least will begin to perceive that they will do well to leave the Conservative meetings alone. (Cheers.) This is my deliberate advice to you as President of this club. When I was last here I delivered an inaugural address to you as to the course to pursue in the conduct of a contest. At that time it was not necessary to consider extreme measures like those we are now driven to, but you must now consider yourselves put upon your mettle, and take whatever step is necessary to compel respect from your opponents. You have the power, and I have no doubt you have the will, and with that power and will you will obtain success. I think, perhaps, it would be as well if you should to-night arrive at some conclusion on this matter, and come to a resolution that it is your decided intention to so bind and organise yourselves for attendance at Liberal meetings in Birmingham that you may be able to say that we are the strongest and not to be put down. (Cheers.) I venture to invite from the ingenuity of some member of the club a resolution upon this subject, and I should also let it be made public, so that the Liberals may know what to expect.

At the banquet in the evening, at the Exchange Rooms,

Lord R. CHURCHILL said: Mr. Chairman, my lords, and gentlemen, I think I will commence my remarks by saying that I think we ought to be all excessively thankful and grateful to Mr. Chamberlain for the kind permission which he has accorded us to meet together here in Birmingham to-night. Mr. Chamberlain, you know, gentlemen, is, if not the author, at any rate a very enthusiastic apostle of the doctrine that "force is no remedy," and he applied that doctrine in all its native purity when dealing with his allies, the Irish Invincibles; but when dealing with his opponents, the Tory party, he thinks that force is a useful remedy. (Hear, hear.) Now, the Tory party are not quite so stupid as Mr. Chamberlain and his friends think they are. They are much more ready to learn a lesson than is generally supposed; for, having discovered last night the great party advantages which Mr. Chamberlain derived from a timely exhibition of force, I imagine that they will pay

him the compliment on the earliest opportunity of resorting to force themselves. ("Hear, hear," and loud cheers.) Gentlemen, the toast which I am commissioned by your chairman to propose to you is the toast of "Our Constitution" (hear, hear), and I am sure you will drink it right heartily, because it will occur to you to ask if such scenes as we witnessed last night can take place while our Constitution is supposed to be in force, what may we not expect, what may we not legitimately anticipate, in the day when the Constitution is no more, and when Mr. Chamberlain, a pinchbeck Robespierre (cheers), and Sir Charles Dilke, a renegade Democrat, have attained the summit of their ambition in becoming President and Vice-President of the British Republic? (Cries of "Never.") You may, I think, gentlemen, without any exaggeration, anticipate a very genuine and useful imitation of the Reign of Terror, sanctioned and supported by the rule of the guillotine. (Cheers.) The toast of the Constitution is, as far as I know, a novel one at Tory banquets in this particular form, but at the same time I am disposed to consider that at this moment it is a very appropriate toast (hear, hear), because it would be idle to deny, and foolish to blind our eyes to the fact, that our Constitution is in danger. (Hear, hear.) I observed, gentlemen, the other day a report of the proceedings of the Trades Union Congress at Aberdeen, and I noticed that the Trades Union Congress at Aberdeen passed unanimously a resolution that the hereditary principle was to be abolished from our Constitution. In other words, that is proclaiming the downfall of the ancient monarchy of England. (Hear, hear). I think we may with some justice question the authority of that Congress to come to such a decision (hear, hear), because, when the great reform demonstration took place in London at the close of the summer, I was one of the spectators of a spectacle which was undoubtedly in its way impressive. (Cheers.) There was a long line of banners floating down Pall-mall, and the most conspicuous and the best adorned of those banners was one which bore in letters of gold this inscription:—"Politics are the ruin of trades unions." (Hear, hear.) I think, gentlemen, that the constituents of those delegates who met together at Aberdeen, and who proclaimed the downfall of the Monarchy of England, will be entitled—and it will be their bounden duty—to call the delegates to account for the strong politics to which they then and there bound themselves. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, undoubtedly the two most leading and most active features of our Constitution at the present day are the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The proposal is that the House of Commons should be reformed, and that the House of Lords

should be abolished. About the reform of the House of Commons there is absolutely no difference of opinion. ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) Everybody agrees that it is a worthless and a useless House of Commons, and that any reform which takes place in it cannot possibly be a reform for the worse. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) But about the abolition of the House of Lords, I think there is likely to arise a little difference of opinion. We are told on the highest authority that the House of Lords must be abolished on account of its many defects, and Mr. Gladstone says that the principal defect of the House of Lords is that it is an irresponsible body. I take leave to state my conviction that the House of Lords is a far more responsible body than ever the House of Commons or the Government of England. ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) It is quite true that the House of Commons, if it displeases popular opinion, may not be re-elected, but, after all, that is a very transient penalty, and members who are rejected by their constituencies one day very often return to the House of Commons the next day (hear hear), and if that is the limit of the responsibility of the House of Commons, I think the responsibility of the House of Commons is very slender and a very worthless article. (Hear, hear.) Then Mr. Gladstone says that the responsibility of a Government is very great because a Government can be impeached. Well, my opinion is that a Liberal Government cannot be impeached, at any rate in this world. (Laughter.) On what may happen to them hereafter I decline altogether to speculate (laughter), but having often heard the responsibilities of the Government brought before the House of Commons in order to induce that House to take a certain course, I can most truly declare, from my own experience, that the responsibility of a British Government is a perfect fiction and a perfect phantom. (Hear, hear.) But whenever the House of Lords takes any very decided action, any very strong action on some matter on which popular opinion is greatly interested in one way or another, the question is immediately raised of the constitution and the continued existence of the House of Lords. (Hear.) That is no slight issue; it is no transient penalty which is involved if the House of Lords should be condemned or should be found to be in the wrong by the people of England. On the contrary, the abolition of the House of Lords, if it was once decreed by the people of England, would be perpetual and eternal, and you would no more be able to replace the House of Lords than you could replace the ancient Senate of Rome or the dead and bygone Diet of Frankfort. (Cheers.) Do you think that the House of Lords, that the members of that House, are not aware of the responsibility under which they act? Do you not think

that they are proud of the position which they hold, of the rights which they claim, and of the duties which they have to discharge? (Hear, hear.) Do you think that they do not know that they are bound by all the honour which can attach to ancient names to hand down to their descendants that position, those rights, and those duties untarnished, undiminished, and unshorn? (Cheers.) And they know that if they would enjoy that position, if they would still continue to claim those rights, still continue to discharge those duties, they must ever act in such a manner that the freedom and the liberties of the English people shall suffer no detriment at their hands (cheers), and that in case the freedom of Englishmen, which is our proudest birthright, was by their action in any way injured, that position, those rights, and those duties would vanish for ever. The members of the House of Lords are continually impressed with that idea, and as they faithfully and courageously and honestly accepted that idea, so I claim before this meeting that they have equally faithfully and equally loyally discharged their duties to the people of England. We pledge ourselves, gentlemen, to-night—in drinking this toast, we pledge ourselves solemnly to the defence of the House of Lords (hear, hear), as the only guarantee for the preservation of British liberty, and we pledge ourselves to the defence of the House of Lords as representing the Tory party in Birmingham (hear, hear), and in sympathy with the Tory party throughout the length and breadth of England; and we pledge ourselves that we will cease from no labour and no toil, we will shrink from no issue, and we will recoil from no danger in fighting out this contest, which the Government have deliberately provoked, to its bitter and its bitterest end.

On the 16th October, 1884, at a dinner of the Nechell's Ward Conservatives, Birmingham, Lord R. Churchill foreshadowed the syndicate of provincial newspapers—a Conservative News Agency (Limited), with a capital of £100,000, in one pound shares, founded under his lordship's presidency and an influential patronage, in July, 1885.

The temporary excitement arising from the heat of the riot, at which, by the way, no lives were, fortunately, lost, died away with no more serious consequences than a few short terms of imprisonment to the rabble concerned, a correspondence between Lord R. Churchill and the Mayor of Birmingham, and several personal altercations in the House, where Mr. Chamberlain styled Lord R. Churchill's friend "a jackal."

On the 30th October, 1884, in moving an amendment to the address, Lord R. Churchill fulfilled his promise to "draw the badger," or, in other words, force Mr. Chamberlain

to answer his charge of complicity in the Birmingham riot. The answer was a general denial, and Mr. Gladstone closed an unprofitable wrangle with a dignified air, which was a double rebuke.

VISIT TO INDIA.

The state of health of Lord R. CHURCHILL, as he looked pallid, walked without animation and was dull of eye, alarmed his friends. On the suggestion of Mr. Gorst, his lordship selected India for his recreation ground. By the end of November, 1884, he had been kindly relieved of his pledges to attend meetings, all regret and disappointment being tempered by the belief that the great Franchise question was settled, and that the voyage would recuperate the apostle of Democratic Toryism for any fresh campaign. He was received in our Eastern Empire with much cordiality, and rapidly improved on that warmth of reception by being so affable in his incessant inquiries upon the country that he was a favourite in all society when the time came for departure. The highest dignitaries and the most notable of the natives had similarly esteemed it an honour to include this rising star of Conservatism at their parties, and the poetical pundits recited Sanscrit odes to his praise, of which the echoes accompanied him to the coast. As one influential Indian daily said, one of a unanimous host: "Lord R. Churchill took every opportunity of making acquaintance with Indian matters of importance, and he has promised to exert himself in bringing various Indian questions before Parliament."

Early in April, 1885, Lord R. CHURCHILL came home, and on the 15th of April he entered the House once more. There was held a *levée* in welcome, all being rejoiced to see the happy transformation effected in so brief a space, the Indian sun having browned the face, brightened the eye, and electrified the frame and step. On the same evening he proved by subtle questions that his alert wit had been also re-invigorated.

* On the 8th April, in a letter to thank the Birmingham Parliamentary Debating Society for informing him of a motion against the Government being carried, his lordship forecast the defeat of the Gladstone Ministry, and asked the Society's support for himself as a Conservative candidate at their town.

SPEECH AT THE PRIMROSE LEAGUE BANQUET.

18TH APRIL, 1885.

The annual banquet of the Primrose League in commemoration of the death of Lord Beaconsfield was held at St. James's Hall. The chair was taken by Lord John Manners, M.P.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL proposed the toast of the evening—"The Primrose League"—and said: The very high honour of proposing the next toast has been confided to my very imperfect and inadequate capabilities, and I would bespeak your kind indulgence while I endeavour, as best I can, to discharge a difficult duty. I have often been asked the question, "What is the Primrose League?" The Primrose League—to give the best definition which occurs to me—is a transformation into political energy of the emotions which were aroused by Lord Beaconsfield's death and the sentiments which are excited by the knowledge of his career. Those emotions and those sentiments were displayed with extraordinary force by the spontaneous determination of great numbers of people to commemorate the anniversary of the 19th of April by the wearing of the primrose. I said spontaneous, because it was truly spontaneous. It was, as it were, a mysterious, magnetic thrill, which caused thousands of English hearts to resolve that on every recurring 19th of April they would display to the world their knowledge of a great man's life, and their faith in the excellence of his Parliamentary and Ministerial deeds. (Cheers.) Well, my lords and gentlemen, three anniversaries were thus commemorated by increasing numbers and with increasing enthusiasm and zeal, including those whose attention, I may say, is concentrated on political controversy, and whose days, and even nights, are occupied in resisting the Radical host with a popular sentiment which time had shown to be genuine and durable, and to be utilised in a practicable form, and transformed into a living political force. (Cheers.) There was, as you are no doubt aware, much of poetry and romance in the best sense of the word attaching to Lord Beaconsfield's career. It was essentially a career of genius and imagination, inspired by a profound study of the past. It was a career of resistless triumph over obstacles to ordinary mortals insuperable, as was the triumph of a mediæval knight. It was determined, and I think wisely determined, that those characteristics should be as far as possible set forth in the title of the members and in the ordinances and procedure of the League. I do not myself think

that that determination would have been in any way displeasing to the illustrious hero whose career we are commemorating this evening, because he has laid down in those celebrated Runnymede letters, when describing all the qualities which go to make up a great nation, that the spirit of chivalry is indispensable. Well, when this association was first founded and its character made public, there were those who laughed, not only among our opponents, but also among our friends. But, gentlemen, those laugh best who laugh last (cheers), and for my part, I have every hope that when the result of the coming election is made known, the knights of the Primrose League will be laughing cheerily, and their hearts will be beating proudly in the consciousness of good work done. There is, my lords and gentlemen, no better test of the merits of an institution or of an individual than the capacity to endure ridicule, and tried by this severe test, the Primrose League has shown itself to be real. From the day, less than two years ago—from the day when some half dozen or more gentlemen met together in the Carlton and founded the League to the present day, when its members may be numbered by thousands, in spite of every kind of ridicule and criticism, it has grown, and grown, and grown. It has flowed all over the country into town and hamlet alike, winning its way among all classes, and gathering into the net of the institution hundreds of able and zealous workers whom ordinary political organisations might never have touched. In every constituency in this country where there is a habitation of the Primrose League the Conservative candidate will have at his command a band of workers, a *corps d'élite*, volunteers and not mercenaries, representing and drawn from all classes of the community, united by the most perfect equality, and pledged by honour and by the principles of their political faith to sacrifice their time and devote all their energy, experience, and influence to placing him at the head of the poll. My lords and gentlemen, for my part I prefer the Primrose League to the caucus (cheers), and I will back the Primrose League against the caucus. (Cheers.) I believe that the reason for the extraordinary development and growing power of the organisation which we are celebrating this evening is that its objects and its aims are high. I do not think there was ever a time in our history when such an organisation was more needed. The great defeat of our party in 1880 was on the whole, I firmly believe, a necessary experience for the nation, and I do not regret it. It not only purged the Tory party of much that was rotten and much that was hopelessly antiquated, but it has enabled the common sense of England to

detect in a practical manner and by experience, which, though bitter, will not be forgotten, the worthlessness of Liberal promises and the danger of the Liberal policy. (Loud cheers.) Where is your reduced taxation? Where is your revived trade? Where is your harvest of beneficial legislation? Where are your diminished foreign liabilities? Where is your reign of universal peace? (Laughter.) Where, ah! where indeed? During five and more weary years the nation has anxiously awaited these blessings at the hands of Mr. Gladstone, and though he and all his followers boldly and boastfully declared their power of bestowing them, none of these things have been done. On the contrary, all those advantages which a nation rightly looks for from its Government are more remote than ever, and not only are they remote owing to the policy of the Liberal Government, but that very policy has placed it out of the power of any Government coming into office now immediately or easily to attain them. (Cheers.) In the presence of the noble chairman, who is rightly regarded as one of the leaders of the Tory party (cheers), I do not hesitate to assert that the Tory party will make to the country no such promises as those which deluded the Mid-Lothian electors and which are the indelible disgrace of the Mid-Lothian campaign. Reduced taxation cannot possibly be obtained immediately when, owing to a short-sighted and stupid policy, a great part of Africa is on your hands, when, for the same reason, short-sightedness and stupidity, you are on the verge of a war with Russia, when, for the same reasons your relations with all the European Powers are strained and unfriendly, and when, for all these reasons, it is a matter of life and death to us to enlarge and maintain on a sadly extended scale our naval and military armaments. (Hear, hear.) Well, gentlemen, neither with such a state of things as this can you reasonably expect revived trade. A revived and flourishing commerce is inseparable from assured and general peace; but experience has shown us that, with the present Government in office, all hopes of peace are as idle dreams. Well, gentlemen, I will not, with your permission, pursue these topics any further, though I would be sorely tempted to do so (cries of "Go on") for a reason which I will give you in a minute, and which I think you will consider a sound one. They are topics which have been forced on the minds of the people by Tory speakers in all parts of the country with every variety of argument and rhetoric. The good seed has been sown on receptive soil, and the harvest will be reaped when Parliament is dissolved. (Cheers.) We are met here, my lords and gentlemen, this evening, at a great crisis in our national history, and curiously

enough, the place of our meeting is either celebrated or infamous, as you please, as being the very place where, some seven years ago, the Liberal party raised the wild cry of "perish India," at a great representative gathering, and the crisis which is now agitating our minds arises out of the interest of our Indian Empire. My lords and gentlemen, I think you will agree with me that it is our duty, not only as Englishmen, but especially as members of this society, at any moment of national emergency, to ask ourselves what would have been the attitude of Lord Beaconsfield, and what advice he would have given us if he had seen this day. (Hear, hear.) I believe that he would have told you (I judge only from my knowledge of his own political career)—I believe he would have told you that it was your duty to sustain and stimulate the patriotism and the courage of the people (cheers), and to postpone to a more convenient season the energetic, or perhaps, I should rather say, the acrimonious prosecution of party controversy. I would not willingly say one word, and I do not believe there is anybody in this hall who would willingly say one word, which, however indirectly, could injure the chances of the preservation of peace or precipitate the chances of war; but there is a word which I think must be said, for there are certain organs in this country and groups of politicians, well meaning, I have no doubt, but very eccentric (laughter), who are putting forward certain views and considerations which, if not strenuously answered and refuted, might dangerously mislead the public. My lords and gentlemen, your task of governing India, which you have been carrying on now for more than a hundred years, is a task of great difficulty and danger, the difficulties and dangers of which do not diminish as time goes on. Your rule in India is, as it were, a sheet of oil spread out over the surface of, and keeping calm and quiet and unruffled by storms, an immense and profound ocean of humanity; and it is your task, your most difficult business to give peace, individual security, and general prosperity to the 250 millions of people who are affected by those powerful forces to bind them and to weld them by the influence of your knowledge, your law and your higher civilization in process of time into one great united people, and to offer to all the nations of the West the advantages of tranquility and progress in the East. (Cheers.) That is your task for India. That is your *raison d'être* in India. That is your title to India. And I say that a task so difficult, so enormous, and yet so beneficent ought to command the sympathy and friendly assent of every European power. (Cheers.) For undoubtedly it is in their interest as well as in yours that the task should be successfully

accomplished. Well, to a great extent that sympathy and friendly assent has been secured; but there is one European Power—the Russian Empire—which for many years has been making the progress of stable government in India not only difficult but almost impossible. (Hear, hear.) That sometimes stealthy, sometimes open, always gradual, always sure advance of the countless hosts of Russia upon the North-West Frontier of India, now resembling the gliding of a serpent, and at another time resembling the bounding of a tiger, hopelessly prevents and prohibits your government in India from acquiring any real stability or striking its roots deep among the native peoples. The eyes of the natives are continually directed toward the North-West. The political discussions of the natives—and they have many political discussions nowadays—always turn upon the Russian advance. Every political project or view which they are inclined to take up and put forward is always coloured and qualified by the Russian advance. They know that from that quarter has come every conquest in India but one; they see in that quarter mighty armies moving, and I tell you, gentlemen, that unless that most insidious and malignant movement of Russian armies is permanently arrested (prolonged cheering), it is foolish and futile to hope for any real political or social progress in India under British rule. It is not, in my mind, a question of Penjdeh, or Herat, or any other quarter of the world, on which certain people are fixing now a ludicrously microscopic amount of attention. That is not the question. The question is this—Will you permit or will you once for all put a stop to, and finally suppress, the constant and carefully prepared series of irritations, menaces, and alarms (cheers) which as long as it continues cripples and paralyses all your efforts to direct definitely the destinies of Hindostan. If the result of the present dispute with Russia should demonstrate any failure on our part to determine once for all the hostile designs of that empire, I do not say you will lose India to-morrow; but of this I am as certain as that I am standing here—that your rule in India will have received a mortal blow; that all hopes of political and social progress there will have for ever vanished; that the deadly decrepitude which fell upon the old Indian and Mogul Empires will fall upon you and your Empire; and that the annihilation of your power will be but a question of time.

ON THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

(*May 4th*, 1885.)

It was considered from the Prime Minister's announcements that the breach of the agreement of the 16th March between Russia and England was to be referred to arbitration, and that the future business of frontier delimitation would be pursued in London, Sir Peter Lumsden being recalled hither.

Lord R. CHURCHILL said: It was with utter consternation that a very large proportion of members heard the words which fell just now from the Prime Minister. It was his opinion that the news announced by the Prime Minister was terrible news, terrible news, at any rate, to those who were deeply anxious for the security of our Empire. (Hear, hear.) There were three points about which, undoubtedly, issues had arisen between the Government of Russia and Her Majesty's Government. The first was the delimitation of the Afghan frontier; the second point was the conflict at Ak Tapa, and the third point was whether the delimitation could be settled on the spot or in London. The Prime Minister had announced to-night that on every one of these points the Government had made a base and cowardly surrender. (Opposition cheers.) He greatly feared, though he hoped his fears would not be realised, that we might lose India (cries of "Oh"), not lose it in the practical effect of the word, for he did not mean to say that our army and our officials would have to bundle out of India to-morrow, bag and baggage, as the Prime Minister wished to bundle out the Turks from Europe (Mr. Gladstone —Never), but in the action that Her Majesty's Government had taken under the present extraordinary circumstances they had lost for a long time, and perhaps for ever, the respect and loyalty of the natives, and whatever affection existed between ourselves and our Indian subjects. He felt certain that when the news of what had been stated to-day in the House of Commons reached and was widely known in the bazaars of India, from Lahore to Delhi and from Bombay to Hyderabad, the respect and sympathy of the Indian people for England would be greatly shaken. The news had come upon the House so suddenly that it was, he admitted, difficult to discuss it. He had hoped against hope that the Government were really in earnest, particularly when the Prime Minister made the speech the other night, in which he indicated that by no action of theirs would they jeopardise one jot of this country or India.

He had hoped that; and he believed that every one of the Opposition entertained the same hope, for even the Prime Minister acknowledged that the attitude of the Opposition was eminently patriotic when they abstained from putting questions and from inconvenient debate on this subject. But now their hopes were utterly upset. (Opposition cheers.) The steps that had been taken could not be retraced, the surrender could not be recalled. Under these circumstances, he contended that it was a perfect farce to proceed with the Vote of Credit. (Opposition cheers.) One more point. The Prime Minister denounced the Vote of Credit of the Conservative Government of 1878 because he said it was unparalleled and unprecedented that a power should come together with a friendly power for the highest specific purposes, and should have their conferences wantonly disturbed by the clash of arms. How did this arbitration with a friendly State, and these Conferences between the two Powers—how did they differ from the Conference of 1878, for which the then Conservative Government asked for a vote? Why, if the right hon. gentleman's contention was sound, did he now invite the House of Commons to depart from the maxim which he himself had laid down, and disturb this Conference with Russia and a friendly State by the clash of arms? (Opposition cheers.) This was not his argument; he would not give twopence for it. He did not believe in the lines upon which it was based or in the contention by which it was put forward. His argument was that a Vote of Credit so enormous was the largest demand which a Government could make upon the confidence of Parliament, and he contended that the circumstances which on Monday last might have been more or less favourable to a unanimous expression of confidence were now distinctly unfavourable. There were two parties with whom independent members had to deal in this matter. They had to deal directly with Her Majesty's Government, and indirectly with the Government of Russia; and it was perfectly certain, and he thought he should be able to prove it to the House, that in the Government of Russia the Parliament of England could place no confidence. He thought it would also be obvious to the House, from what he should lay before them, and from what had passed to-night, that in the Government of the Queen the Parliament of England could place no confidence. And when they remembered the famous declaration in the speech from the Throne that the Government would maintain the authority of the Crown in South Africa, and that that authority had not been maintained; the declaration that the Government would rescue General Gordon, and that Genera Gordon had not been rescued (hear, hear); the declaration

only a few months ago that Her Majesty's Government intended to smash the power of the Mahdi, and that that power had not been smashed and was not to be smashed (cheers and counter cheers); the disgraceful and degrading incident of how her Majesty's Government had led that poor little protected Government of Egypt into a horrible muddle (hear, hear), and had forced that poor little Government to wallow in the gutter before France, and had gladly associated themselves in that act of humility—(Opposition cheers and laughter)—when they remembered all this in connection with the incidents specially connected with the Russian advances, it was impossible for them to repose the slightest confidence in Her Majesty's Government. In the last speech he ever made, the late Lord Beaconsfield said that the key of India was London (cheers and laughter), that it lay in the resources of the English people. In one sense Lord Beaconsfield was wrong, or it might be that he was only half right. He agreed that the key of India was not at Herat, nor at Penjdeh, nor in the hands of General Komaroff, or of Sir Peter Lumsden; but it was not altogether London in the sense Lord Beaconsfield supposed. The key of India was in that House—on the Treasury bench—in the hands of those right hon. gentlemen upon whose decision it would depend whether the key should be turned and the lock opened, or whether the door should be for ever bolted and barred. (Cheers.) He would make one further remark with regard to India itself, with which this matter was so inseparably associated. It was very bad form indeed for any man to go to a country, pass a certain time there, and then come forward and think he was empowered and entitled to prophesy or lay down the law in any way about the condition of affairs in that country. He had made a careful effort to avoid any imputation of that kind, but at the same time he might say that he did not think it possible for any human being of ordinary intelligence to go to India under the extraordinary advantages which fell to his lot and be brought into contact with all the great personages of the land, native and European, without arriving at some fairly accurate general conclusion, some fairly reliable estimate, as to the British position in India. He doubted if any member of the House who had not visited India could realise how incredibly strong, and at the same time how incredibly slender, our position in India was. It was strong far beyond ordinary human strength so long as we showed ourselves capable of ruling; but it was weaker than the weakest the moment we showed the faintest indications of relaxing. (Cheers.) It was his good fortune to hear from an Indian official one of the finest descriptions of the Mutiny he had ever heard. He was

told how the Government which appeared so strong, so durable, so splendid, so elaborate, and so terrible, was in the space of twenty-four hours rolled and crumpled up like a scroll of paper, so completely did it disappear that no man might know that any Government had ever existed there before. (Cries of "No.") That was the description given him by one of the highest officials in the North-West Provinces of the state of that part of India. The gentleman to whom he referred was no less a person than Sir Alfred Lyall. Our Government in India was a most magnificent machine, but it lived on nothing but character and credit. In addition to that, there were many difficulties and dangers in the way of India. He did not know whether Her Majesty's Government was aware of it, but discontent of a most serious kind existed in the Indian army owing to the pay, and in a great measure to the impossibility of native soldiers rising to any rank above that of a subaltern officer. In the second place, many of the Indian princes had great grievances against the Calcutta Government, some of them more or less were founded. All had gone on for a long time neglected by the Government. Then there was an extraordinary political movement going on all through India, a movement which is copying with wonderful fidelity the most perfect forms of organisation such as were dear to the minds of hon. gentlemen opposite, and which had for its object the acquisition by natives of a much larger share in the Government. (Ministerial cheers.) That was one of the new difficulties which they were bound to contend against. There was also an extraordinary movement of the masses of India to and fro all over India. It was an extraordinary migration of hundreds of thousands conveyed by railway from one part to another, producing what we had never before had to deal with in India—a novel and formidable solidarity and unanimity in native thought and action. In addition to that was the native Indian Press, conducted every day with more ability, knowledge, and discretion, increasing in circulation, but which would by no means conceal the knowledge of facts which the more obedient English Press would suppress. Those were among the dangers to which our rule was exposed in India. He believed that every one of them might be successfully met if we emerged from the present crisis with an increased sense of security and with credit undiminished (cheers); but he felt sure that all these difficulties and problems would assume gigantic proportions, and become insoluble and unmanageable if the result of these negotiations with Russia terminated in humiliation for England and in diminished security in India. (Cheers.) He knew perfectly well how very powerless one member of Parliament

was against a great Government, and he knew well how powerless, even from numerical weakness, was the action of a united party. That being so, it was not his intention to make even an appeal, for he was too weak; but he would make a supplication couched, if they wished it, in any terms, however humble, which their dignity demanded, because he felt earnestly upon it. (Cheers.) He implored Her Majesty's Government in dealing with this crisis, if it were not too late, which he feared it was—this crisis which, he believed, if wisely and properly treated, might turn out one of those great opportunities which occurred rarely in the life of a nation—he implored them in dealing with this crisis to allow two thoughts chiefly to prevail. In the first place, to keep a vivid memory of the past perfidy of Russia and a clear and unclouded view of our present attitude and position; and, on the other hand, to think only of the interests of our Indian people and of the immeasurable duty which we owe to them. (Cheers.) If these thoughts only were to animate their minds and guide their actions, he believed that even Her Majesty's Government at that hour might effectually protect and preserve the honour and dignity of the Empire. (Loud cheers).

SPEECH AT ST. STEPHEN'S CLUB.

Lord R. Churchill took the chair on the 20th May, 1885, at a house dinner of this club. There were about 170 members present.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL, in giving "The Queen," said: Gentlemen, I rise to ask you to drink the health of Her Majesty the Queen with peculiar feelings of loyalty at the present moment, for it is undoubtedly the fact that Her Majesty's Empire is menaced from more than one quarter, and that fact alone would make members of the Tory party rally with respectful enthusiasm around the Crown. (Cheers.) But I cannot help thinking that if, under Providence, we are extricated from the great difficulties which surround the nation, it will be peculiarly owing to the wise and sagacious counsels which Her Majesty, from her long experience of public affairs, and from the great influence she is able to command by reason of the unparalleled manner in which she has filled the position of a constitutional Sovereign, is able to give. (Hear, hear.) I cannot help thinking, I repeat, that if we are extricated from our present difficulties and dangers, it may possibly be owing in no small degree to the wisdom and sagacity of Her Majesty herself. Whatever may be the result of these storms, of these political conflicts, we have, at any rate, in the person of our

beloved Sovereign, one about whose excellence and whose wisdom not a shade or a shadow of a doubt or difference can by any possibility arise in the mind of any one of the millions of Her Majesty's subjects. I ask you to drink the health of the Queen. Furthermore, his lordship said: The toast of the cause of the Tory party is one which, to do it anything like justice, would require a larger amount of preparation and forethought than Parliamentary occupation has permitted me to give; but I feel sure that if I in any degree fall short of your legitimate expectations of the manner in which that toast ought to be responded to you will forgive me. (Hear, hear.) I imagine that one of the leading features of the cause and of the principles of the Tory party would be the maintenance of the connection between Ireland and Great Britain. (Cheers.) Therefore, I would ask your attention for a few passing moments to the condition of Ireland as it is illustrated to us by the Ministerial announcement of the other night—that the Government intend to apply to Parliament for a renewal of those Acts which are called the Coercion Acts. I lay this down without any hesitation as an absolute and unimpeachable constitutional doctrine, that while any British Government may reasonably, and with perfect confidence, apply to Parliament, in times of great popular disorder, for exceptional and unconstitutional powers, at the same time, when that popular disorder has passed away, the Government is bound by the highest considerations of public policy and of constitutional doctrine to return to and to rely on the ordinary law. We had every reason to hope, and I think every reason ultimately to believe, that the time of great popular disorder in Ireland had passed away, or, at any rate, had been largely mitigated. The published returns to Parliament showed no abnormal amount of crime. Ireland is, as you know, marvellously free from ordinary crime as we know it in this country, and the peculiar class of crime which is known as agrarian outrage has sunk to a very low level. We know that the harvest for the last four years has been exceptionally good, and that there is no amount of acute agricultural distress, a fertile source of outrage at all times. We know Parliament has thought this the proper moment to enfranchise some 700,000 of the Irish peasantry; and we know further that the Prince and Princess of Wales, with a devotion to the public service perhaps unequalled in the history of the Royal Family, and with a rare courage, heroism, and resolution, have visited Ireland, having traversed the country from end to end, and have been received as they had a right to be received. (Cheers.) The presence of Royalty has provoked and stimulated loyalty. Well, that was

the amount of our knowledge. But now, gentlemen, what does this mean, this announcement of the Government that they are prepared to ask Parliament for a renewal of the Coercion Act? Parliament has just enfranchised considerably over half-a-million of the Irish people, and has declared them to be capable citizens, fit to take part in the Government of this Empire. How do you suppose all these 700,000 new electors will go to the poll? What thoughts will they have in their minds? Will they not go to the poll with the knowledge that the Parliament of England in its last dying days, in a moment when they were unrepresented, who had been declared to be capable citizens, had given them what they will think a parting kick? To you, gentlemen, as I said the other day about the Government surrender to Russia, I say that is terrible news. I say it is even more than that—it is a crushing condemnation of the Irish policy of the Gladstone Government during the last five years, and I say more—it is irrefutable and unanswerable evidence that the Liberal party cannot govern Ireland without that arbitrary force which all their greatest orators have over and over again declared is no remedy for lawlessness. That I pass by, merely respectfully entreating your deepest consideration from the point of view which I have ventured to suggest, and to consider it without prejudice. I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to study the history of our country, and I cannot call to mind, and I do not know whether anybody in this room can call to mind, any period in that history when you had to deal with and when you had to resist so many foes, open and concealed, at the same time. (Hear, hear.) You have the great power of Russia advancing rapidly on India, and you see her putting forward day by day as you give way to her more and more preposterous pretensions. (Cheers.) What is meant by this? You can see by the vote of credit of eleven millions which was demanded from Parliament, and from the financial deficit, of unparalleled magnitude, which is the accompaniment of that vote of credit. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Oxford in 1877 and 1878, talked about the vote of discredit of the late Government. He said he would not call it a vote of credit, but a vote of discredit. I think we might apply that term to Mr. Gladstone's late demand. Well, what are the other features of the foreign situation? You have Turkey, whose alliance for the purpose of resisting a Russian advance is absolutely indispensable to you (cheers)—you have Turkey hopelessly estranged by a long course of unfriendly and sometimes hostile proceedings. All acts of that kind are acts of lunacy (hear), because it is upon the friendship of Turkey that your power for successfully rolling back the tide of Russian conquest in Central Asia absolutely

depends. (Hear, hear.) Let me say, with all due respect, that if you desire to gain a clear view of the state of European politics at the present moment, you must realize this, that the foreign policy which Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville and their colleagues have pursued during five years has produced against you what is neither more nor less than a European combination. There is a very melancholy reflection which I should like to bring to your minds at the present moment—that whereas in old days it used to be a position of great safety for any country to be an ally of England, it was also a position of great pride and dignity for any individual to be an envoy of England. (Hear, hear.) But what is the state of things nowadays? All that is changed. Our two most prominent allies, the Khedive of Egypt and the Ameer of Afghanistan, have had to submit to a very considerable loss of valuable territory, and as for the friendly native tribes of the Soudan or of South Africa, they have had to submit to being plundered of all their possessions and deprived of their liberty and their homes. (Hear, hear.) As for our envoys, the position nowadays of an envoy of England is simply ruin.

ASSUMPTION OF THE MINISTRY FOR INDIA.

On the second reading of the Budget, Mr. Gladstone put the vital issue of the debate as a choice between taxing alcoholic liquors or tea or sugar. The Government were defeated in a House of 516 by a majority of 12. A crisis ensued, during which it seemed that the defeated Cabinet might have returned to power but for the impossibility to reconcile the members on one course as regarded the Irish Coercion Bill. On the 18th June, 1885, the Gladstonian Cabinet was no more, and Lord Salisbury was entrusted with forming a new one. In its high posts, the subject of our memoir was favoured with the Secretaryship for India. He applied himself to his duties as ruler of 250 millions of men so assiduously, that even his own re-election had to be pursued without his personal intervention. In his absence, Lady Churchill herself pervaded Woodstock to invigorate apathetic voters. By a majority of 127 (notable as compared with that in 1880, being 60, and of 1874, being 55), Lord Randolph Churchill's name once more came out at the head the 3rd July, 1885. As for his bearing and language under an honour and responsibility almost unparalleled upon so young a politician, it is the consensus of opinion (even including the Opposition), that it is worthy the position and his lineage.

00023969

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 March, 2016